MAHARASHTRA
Ahead

April 10, 17 & 24

Maharashtra Ready to Vote

Election Special

Exercise Your Right to Vote

The General Elections to constitute the 16th LokSabhain India have been announced recently. Maharashtra will go to the polls in three phases on April 10, 17 and 24 for the forty eight Lok Sabha seats.

The registration of new voters has been streamlined to ensure maximum voters registration. Simultaneously, precautionary measures are being taken to ensure enforcement of Model Code of Conduct in letter and spirit in the entire State. A total of 89,479 polling centres have been set up in 55, 907 places in Maharashtra for the 7.89 crore registered voters in the State.

The Election Commission of India's Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme has been effectively implemented through a vigorous media campaign to increase the voter turnout. Sitting at their home, the voters can now locate the polling booths through the website of Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra or get any other detail regarding the election process.

The Government has geared up the law and order machinery in the State to prevent any untoward incident. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), State Police Force (SPF) and Home Guards will be deployed to strengthen the law and order and ensure free and fair elections.

Maharashtra has a glorious history of free, fair and peaceful elections. Every citizen has the boundened duty to strengthen the democratic institution of the country. I appeal to all the voters to exercise their electoral franchise in large number with great enthusiasm.

J S Saharia
Chief Secretary
Maharashtra State

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Disclaimer: Views and opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the writers

Empowering Women's Leadership

State Election Commission has launched a unique project to make the women in the local self government bodies mature in decision making and also to make them competent socially and politically, says **Smt. Neela Satyanarayana**, State Election Commissioner.

The Government of India, by providing 50 per cent reservation to women in the Panchayat Raj system has taken the first step to make them competent. As many as 98,669 women are functioning as office-bearers in 27,896 Gram Panchayats. It is the constitutional responsibility of the State Election Commission to conduct free and fair elections in the local self government bodies.

It has been seen that due to social or family constrains, women did not dare to contest election independently. Some of them after being elected as a member of Gram Panchayat could not handle their responsibilities freely because of the family pressure. In most of the families, their family heads handles the responsibility of that post. Taking note of this fact, the State Election Commission has launched a unique project to make the women in the local self government bodies mature in decision making and also to make them competent socially and politically. The project Kranti Jyoti has been launched for Socio Political Empowerment of Women

Smt. Neela Satyanarayana, State Election Commissioner

Councilors in Local Self Bodies for Effective Decision Making and Governance so that these competent women members come forward as role model and become a source of inspiration for the other women who aspire to participate in future elections. The project has been named after great social reformer 'Kranti Jyoti' Savitribai Phule as a tribute to her contribution to women education. The project was launched with inspirational slogan 'Amhi Saarya Jani' i.e. 'We the Women'.

PILOT PROJECT (2010)

The first training programme, in coordination with Symbiosis, was held at Selu taluka (Wardha), and Jawahar, Mokhada taluka (Thane), where 266 women trainees were present. The training format was conceptualized by the State Election Commissioner. Mumbai's Ryan International Education Institute had offered financial assistance. The Training format is:

- Three days workshop .
- Training in informal atmosphere.
- Use of means like games, songs and practical instead of textbook information.
- Competent team of trainers from State to rural level.
- Stress has been given on information related to functiuoning of Gram

The Government of India, by providing 50 per cent reservation to women in the Panchayat Raj system has taken the first step to make them competent

Panchayat, social burning issues, and personality development.

• The projects planning has been done by keeping in mind the social binding.

• Traning material has been provided in the local languages.

• Suceess stories of the women members also discussed to inspire newly contested women members .

• Regular follow up programme at the end of training . The State Election Commission had organised a training programme for chief trainers. Resource and Support Centre for Development (RSCD) developed the training programme for the implementation of the project, while the College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan had coordinated the workshop.

SUBJECTS IN TRAINING PROGRAMME

• Functioning of Panchayat Raj
• Gram Panchayat budget
• Personality development and social illusions
• Superstitions and social issues and means to tackle them
• Success stories of women
• Discussion on local issues
• Gender equality

Savitribai Phule
(1831-1897)

क्रांती ज्योती
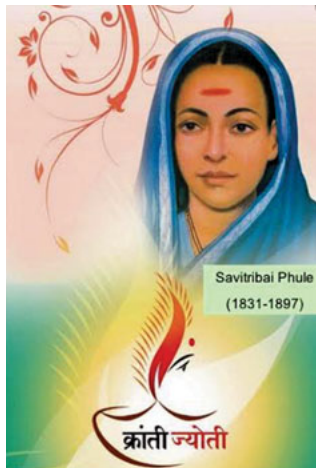
KRANTI JYOTI
Socio Political Empowerment of Women Councilors in Local Self Bodies for Effective Decision Making and Governance

DISTRICT COORINDATOR AND FUNCTIONING OF CHIEF TRAINERS

• Planning training workshops for district level trainers and providing training to them
• Planning funds for district level projects
• The training material includes chief trainers guide, panchayat raj functioning, geet malla, ordinance, poster, certificate, stationery, cloth bag.
• The Kranti Jyoti presentation

is available on www. krantijyotimaharashtra. blogspot.in.

SUCCESS OF PROJECT

In the initial stage, training programme for women councilors was successfully conducted in ten districts of Kolhapur, Wardha, Pune, Solapur, Satara, Sindhudurg, Nashik, Thane, Amravati and Nanded. Funds for the programme were made available by Zilla Parishad and district planning committee. As of date, training of 11,742 women councilors has been completed. It has helped in enhancing their self confidence and efficiency.

KRANTI JYOTI REVIEW…

• Training of women representatives from Thane district by Symbiosis in January, 2010.

• Training of women councilors from Selu (Wardha) through Symbiosis in April, 2010.

• Financial assistance by Ryan International in April, 2010.

• State level chief trainer training – December, 2010.

• Launch of project in 10 districts on the occasion of Savitribai Phule's birth anniversary on January 3, 2011.

• Training of women councilors from Wardha and Kolhapur districts in April, 2012.

Taking note of the success of the novel Kranti Jyoti training programme of the Maharashtra Government, the Ministry of Panchayat Raj has decided to implement the programme countrywide under the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Empowerment. This is the success story of the Kranti Jyoti programme. ■
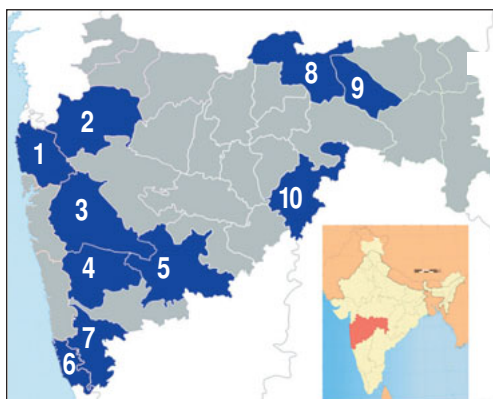
TARGET AREAS
10 Districts to be covered in the first phase:

1. Thane
2. Nashik
3. Pune
4. Satara
5. Solapur
6. Sindhudurg
7. Kolhapur
8. Amravati
9. Wardha
10. Nanded

We Need To Be Responsible

The Election Commission has taken all the possible steps to ensure voters exercise their franchise in an easy manner, says Principal Secretary and the Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra **Shri Nitin Gadre**.

Since independence, India has espoused democracy and election process has a unique place in a democracy. As the election process has to be strong and transparent, Election Commission of India was constituted on January 25, 1950. Shri Sukumar Sen took charge as the country's first Chief Election Commissioner on March 21, 1950. Presently Hon. Shri V. S. Sampath is the Chief Election Commissioner of India and Hon. Shri H. S. Bramha and Hon. Dr. Nasim Zaidi are Election Commissioners. Every State and Union Territory has Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) through whom the Commission conducts elections for the office of the President, Vice President, Rajya Sabha, Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils.

Similarly, preparation of electoral rolls, addition/deletion of names from the voters lists, distribution of voters ID cards, responding to complaints on names in voters list and their redressal come under the jurisdiction of the Election Commission of India. Collectors of every district are the District Election Officers. Maharashtra State has 48 Lok Sabha and 288 Vidhan Sabha constituencies and voters lists are prepared for

Shri Nitin Gadre
Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra

STATE AGE-COHORT WISE ELECTOR INFORMATION					
Name of State		**Maharashtra**		**Year of Revision**	**2014**
Total State Population in numbers (projected upto the year of current revision)					117669050
State Population of 18+ only (in numbers projected to year of current revision)					80298402
Age Cohort	Projected Census Population in age cohort (Projected upto the year of current revision)	%age to total Population	Electors as per currently revised final electoral roll 2014	%age to total population	%age to 18+ population
1	2	3	4	5	6
18-19	3894589	3.31	1075376	0.91	27.61
20-29	16829013	14.30	15055180	12.79	89.46
30-39	18073872	15.36	19220501	16.33	106.34
40-49	17299125	14.70	18190209	15.46	105.15
50-59	11516905	9.79	11984002	10.18	104.06
60-69	6889598	5.86	7250424	6.16	105.24
70-79	3828110	3.25	4052181	3.44	105.85
80+	1967190	1.67	2138769	1.82	108.72
State Total	80298402	68.24	78966642	67.11	98.34

S. No.	Name of State	Members
1	Andhra Pradesh	42
2	Arunachal Pradesh	2
3	Assam	14
4	Bihar	40
5	Chhattisgarh	11
6	Goa	2
7	Gujarat	26
8	Haryana	10
9	Himachal Pradesh	4
10	Jammu and Kashmir	6
11	Jharkhand	14
12	Karnataka	28
13	Kerala	20
14	Madhya Pradesh	29
15	Maharashtra	48
16	Manipur	2
17	Meghalaya	2
18	Mizoram	1
19	Nagaland	1
20	Odisha	21
21	Punjab	13
22	Rajasthan	25
23	Sikkim	1
24	Tamil Nadu	39
25	Tripura	2
26	Uttar Pradesh	80
27	Uttarakhand	5
28	West Bengal	42

UNION TERRITORY WISE

S. No.	Name of State	Members
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1
2	Chandigarh	1
3	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1
4	Daman and Diu	1
5	Delhi	7
6	Lakshadweep	1
7	Puducherry	1

each of them. Every assembly constituency has a Electoral Registration Officer, and as per the Act, he/she is entrusted with the responsibility of preparation of voters list.

As per the final voters list published on January 31, 2014, there are 7.89 crore voters. These include 4.18 crore male and 3.71 crore female voters. Many people are unaware that as per section 17 and 18 of the Representation of Peoples Act, a voter should not have his/her name registered at more than one place. Hence they procure voters ID card by registering themselves afresh at their new place of stay. This sometime results in a voters' names being found registered twice or thrice. A drive to remove such absent, shifted or duplicate names was conducted in the year 2013. However, if a voter has been registered in more than one place, he/she should visit the concerned registration officer of the constituency and fill up Form No. 7 and such voters whose names do not figure in the voters list should fill up Form No. 6 to get themselves registered. Citizens can get information about the roll and search their names in the roll on the Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra's website www.ceo.maharashtra.gov.in. Also, voters can search the polling centres through GIS mapping on Google Maps.

As many as 89,479 polling stations at 55,907 places will be set up for Lok Sabha 2014 elections in Maharashtra and Central Reserve Police Force, Armed Police Force, State's Police Force and Home Guards alongwith officials and staff would be deployed during the election for peaceful and fearless conduct of the polls. A special watch will be kept at sensitive and hyper sensitive polling stations.

A special project SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) has been undertaken to increase voting percentage in the urban areas of the State and also to increase participation of women in the polling.

Election Commission has taken all posible steps to support the voters. Youth who have attained the age of 18 years should ensure that their names have been included in the voters list and exercise their right to vote, which has been conferred upon by the constitution. ■

Democracy's Guardian

Be it the State elections, general elections, or even electing the President or Vice-President of the country, there is only one body which has to execute this Herculean exercise - the Election Commission of India. **Ajit Andhare** gives an overview of it's role and responsibilities.

Elections are integral to the existence of democracy. Holding an election year after year, without violence or any other malpractice, is in itself a tough task. The challenge becomes Himalayan when elections are to be held in a country politically as diverse and complicated as India, the world's largest democracy. It is not just about preparing ballots and urging the voters to choose whom they want to. Ensuring that all necessary rules and regulations are followed by the stakeholders (political parties, candidates, media, etc.) involved in the process is also of utmost importance. Thought against this backdrop, it is needless to say that the institution which is tasked to hold and oversee this entire process has quite a task at its hand.

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA AND ITS CURRENT FORM

The Election Commission of India (ECI) came into being with India becoming a Republic i.e on January 26, 1950. Be it State elections, general elections, or even electing the President or Vice-President of the country, there is only one body which has to execute this Herculean exercise - the Election Commission of India.

Originally the Commission had only a Chief Election Commissioner. However, currently it has a Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.

For the first time two additional Commissioners were appointed in 1989 but they had a very short tenure. Later, on October 1, 1993 two additional Election Commissioners were appointed. The concept of multi-member Commission has been in operation since then, with decision making power by majority vote.

The President appoints Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners. They have a fixed tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65, whichever is earlier. They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme Court. The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed from office only through impeachment by the Parliament.

According to Election Commission of India's official website, the Commission has a separate Secretariat at New Delhi, consisting of about 300 officials, in a hierarchical

Hon. Shri V. S. Sampath
Chief Election Commissioner of India

Hon. Shri H. S. Brahma
Election Commissioner of India

Hon. Dr. Nasim Zaidi
Election Commissioner of India

According to the EC move, parties can no longer offer freebies to woo the voters

set up.

Two or three Deputy Election Commissioners and Director Generals who are the senior most officers in the Secretariat assist the Commission. They are generally appointed from the national civil service of the country and are selected and appointed by the Commission with tenure. Directors, Principal Secretaries, and Secretaries, Under Secretaries and Deputy Directors support the Deputy Election Commissioners and Director Generals in turn. There is functional and territorial distribution of work in the Commission. The work is organised in Divisions, Branches and sections; each of the last mentioned units is in charge of a Section Officer. The main functional divisions are Planning, Judicial, Administration,

Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation, SVEEP, Information Systems, Media and Secretariat Co-ordination. The territorial work is distributed among

separate units responsible for different Zones into which the 35 constituent States and Union Territories of the country are grouped for convenience of management.

At the State level, the election work is

supervised, subject to overall superintendence, direction and control of the Commission, by the Chief Electoral Officer of the State, who is appointed by the Commission from amongst senior civil servants proposed by the concerned State Government. He is, in most of the States, a full time officer and has a small team of supporting staff.

At the district and constituency levels, the District Election Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers, who are assisted by a large number of junior functionaries, perform election work. They all perform their functions relating to elections in addition to their other responsibilities. During election time, however, they are available to the Commission, more or less, on a full time basis.

The gigantic task force for conducting countrywide general elections consists of nearly five million polling personnel and civil police forces. This huge election machinery is deemed to be on deputation to the Election Commission and is subject to its control, superintendence and discipline during the election period, extending over a period of one and half to two months.

CHANGES OVER THE YEARS

Holding free and fair elections is not that easy. There was a time when violence was rampant during elections, especially in the Hindi heartland. Even today, though by and large elections are violence-free, holding them in Naxal-affected areas remains

a challenge. But the recent elections held in states like Chhattisgarh which witnessed an unprecedented voters' turnout hold a testimony to the fact that the Election Commission of India leaves no stone unturned to keep violence at bay.

It was in 1991, that T N Seshan took helm at the apex poll body. Laxity in implementation of the poll laws with candidates blatantly violating them had become norm of the day. Over 350 persons were killed during the 1991 poll campaign. Several candidates too were killed. Against this backdrop, Seshan's appointment could not have come at a better time.

By cancelling or repolling elections where improprieties had occurred, disciplining errant poll officers, and fighting for the right to deploy paramilitary forces in sensitive areas, Seshan forced candidates to take the Election Commission's code of conduct seriously and strengthened its supervisory machinery.

According to one claim, in Uttar Pradesh, where more than 100 persons were killed in the 1991 elections, Seshan succeeded in reducing the number killed to two in the November 1993 assembly elections by enforcing compulsory deposit of all licensed firearms, banning unauthorized vehicular traffic, and supplementing local police with paramilitary units.

From there it was no looking back. Once violence free elections became a norm rather than exception, the body set its eyes on other issues like technological upgradation.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

Paper ballots have become a thing of past now. It is nothing short of a technological miracle that elections for the largest democracy of the world wherein over a billion voters vote, paper ballots are not used. It is feat which is yet to be achieved by many so-called big nations in the world. Paper ballots have been very effectively and permanently replaced with Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). However, this decision entailed a lot of discussion and debate questioning the efficacy of these machines. One of the most widespread doubts against the machines was whether the vote cast has been registered against the desired choice or not. There were complaints that whichever button a voter presses on the machine, the vote goes in favour of a particular political party or a candidate. However, to counter such allegations and curb this menace, the Election Commission of India introduced the concept of paper trail. Officially called voter verified paper audit trail, it was first introduced in Mizoram state elections in 2013. Later on it also used the recently held Delhi assembly elections. Once a voter presses the button of his choice on the EVM, a paper trail appears for a few seconds. Thus, he can check whether the vote has been cast as per his preference or not. Obviously, the paper slip is collected back at the polling booth. However, the concept is yet to be implemented on a larger scale at the national level.

That's not all. The Election

It is the constant endeavour of the Election Commission of India to ensure that elections are held in free and fair manner

List of Chief Election Commissioners		
Name	**Took Office**	**Left Office**
Sukumar Sen	21 March 1950	19 December 1958
Kalyan Sundaram	20 December 1958	30 September 1967
S. P. Sen Verma	1 October 1967	30 September 1972
Nagendra Singh	1 October 1972 1 October 1972	6 February 1973
T. Swaminathan	7 February 1973	17 June 1977
S. L. Shakdhar	18 June 1977	17 June 1982
R. K. Trivedi	18 June 1982	31 December 1985
R. V. S. Peri Sastri	1 January 1986	25 November 1990
V. S. Ramadevi	26 November 1990	11 December 1990
T. N. Seshan	12 December 1990	11 December 1996
M. S. Gill	12 December 1996	13 June 2001
J. M. Lyngdoh	14 June 2001	7 February 2004
T. S. Krishnamurthy	8 February 2004	15 May 2005
B. B. Tandon	16 May 2005	29 June 2006
N. Gopalaswami	30 June 2006	20 April 2009
Navin Chawla	21 April 2009	29 July 2010
S. Y. Quraishi	30 July 2010	10 June 2012
V. S. Sampath	10 June 2012...	incumbent

Election Commission of India Building, New Delhi

At the State level, the election work is supervised by the Chief Electoral Officer of the State

Commission of India has also digitalized and computersied electoral rolls. Just a search of your name on its official website will help you locate your polling booth. To create, maintain and update a digital record of over a billion voters is indeed a gigantic task.

LOTS TO LOOK FORWARD

It is the constant endeavour of the Election Commission of India to ensure that elections are held in free and fair manner. Also, there is utmost accountability and transparency in this process. Therefore, the poll body has come up with a model code of conduct which comes into force the day when elections are announced. Any deviation from its strict adherence can cost dear to the political party or the candidate.

Candidates are also required to declare on affidavit their moveable and non-moveable assets and criminal cases, pending or ongoing, if any. It helps the voter to take an informed decision. All the necessary

information is collate and made available at the Election Commission's diligently maintained website.

The Election Commission of India, recently, has also circulated draft guidelines to all the stakeholders regarding party manifestoes and promises. According to the Election Commission move, parties can no longer offer freebies to woo the voters. Also, they would have to spell out the rationale behind their electoral promises. It also wants the parties to elaborate the financial means for implementing those promises.

The Election Commission of India had sought feedback from all the six national

and 47 regional parties by February 7, 2014 on the draft guidelines.

Besides this, fighting an election is a costly affair; hence the poll body also seeks to increase the limit on election expenditure by the candidates. The Election Commission's move to raise the individual poll expense limit for both Lok Sabha and Assembly elections was endorsed on February 4, 2014 by almost all political parties, which concurred that inflation had rendered

the respective ceilings of Rs 40 lakh and Rs 16 lakh, not feasible. The consensus at the all-party meeting convened by the Election Commission has paved the way for an amendment of Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, to raise the expenditure ceiling by nearly 30 per cent. The candidate expenditure limit for Loksabha Elections is now Rs. 70 lakh.

Formulating and implementing new systems is a challenge as, at times the Election Commission of India meets with stiff resistance from the Government and political parties who try to throw a rule book at it all the time. The

> The Commission feels that a much higher level of contribution in the field of Voter education and awareness is due from the vibrant and resourceful Corporate Sector of the country. I call upon them to include this under Corporate Social Responsibility of the Companies Act. We look forward to more synergy in future in advancing greater participation of people in the electoral process. Reinforcing Indian democracy through the process of participative elections cannot be a task for Election Commission of India alone. It has got to become a national mission.
>
> - Hon. Shri V. S. Sampath, Chief Election Commissioner of India

Election Commission of India has earned both bouquets and brickbats for its work from all, but the Government and society at large has to understand that strengthening the poll body is strengthening democracy. Only then India will have a Government, an administration which can fulfill aspirations of billions. It is the only way the India can become not only the largest democracy, but also the greatest. More power to the Election Commission is more power to the people. ■

SVEEP: Efforts to Increase Voters Participation

Explaining the details of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation Programme **Shirish Mohod**, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and State SVEEP Nodal Officer says, though the programme is being implemented by the Government, every citizen is expected to offer constructive support to strengthen Indian democracy, the biggest in the world and every Indian citizen should become a voter and exercise right to vote.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has undertaken an ambitious programme - SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) to strengthen Indian democracy by enhancing voters' participation in the voting by making them literate. The Election Commission of India has been making suggestions and issuing guidelines on SVEEP's objectives and planning to implement the programme during the five year period 2013-2018. Considering the fact that the programme would result in the States incurring expenditure on the implementation of the programme, the Election Commission of India has given financial assistance to all the States.

Conducting elections for Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, Legislative Assembly and Council members is the responsibility of the Election Commission of India, while that for Municipal Corporations, Zilla Parishads, Panchayat Samitis and other local self government bodies is of the State Election Commission.

Geographical and statistical information from Maharashtra needs to be considered while understanding the programme.

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF SVEEP

Following are the brief objectives of the SVEEP undertaken by the Election Commission of India

ELECTORAL - POPULATION RATIO

As per 2011 census, India's population is 121.02 crore, while that of Maharashtra is 11.24 crore. This means that Maharashtra's population is 9.30% of the country's total population. As per the population criteria, Maharashtra ranks second after Uttar Pradesh. Of the total population of Maharashtra, urban area accounts for 45.20% while that of rural area is 54.80%. As per the projected population for 2014, Maharashtra's population is 11.73 crore. Of this, those with age of 18 years and above are 8.029 crore. In that comparison, the total electorate is 7.90 crore, which means the Electoral - Population Ratio is 98.34%. It also means that nearly 100% of citizens who become eligible to become voters after completing 18 years of age have been registered as voters. The SVEEP programme aims at achieving 100% registration of voters so that no one who is eligible to be a voter is left out.

VOTING PERCENTAGE

As per the 2001 census, the literacy rate of the total population of seven years and above in Maharashtra stood at 76.90%. It increased to 82.90 % in 2011 though the national average was 64.80% and 74% respectively. Even though Maharashtra's literacy

The Election Commission of India has made financial assistance to all States for implementing SVEEP Programme

Debate competition organised under SVEEP Programme

MAHARASHTRA GEOGRAPHICALLY

Total area of Maharashtra State (Sq Kms)	3,07,713
Coastline (Km)	720
Total revenue divisions	6
No. of districts	35
Total no of talukas	358
Total no. of villages	43,711
Municipal Corporations	26
Municipal Councils	220
Nagar Panchayats	12
Zilla Parishads	33
Panchayat Samiits	351
Gram Panchayats	27,873
Cantonment Boards	7

rate is good, the voting percentage in the last Lok Sabha elections was only 50 per cent.

Mumbai district's literacy rate is almost 90.90 per cent. However, the polling percentage in the last Lok Sabha elections in Mumbai Metropolitan Region was about 40 per cent. Even though Maharashtra is literate educationally, it does not translate when it comes to voting. The SVEEP programme aims to increase voting percentage.

GENDER RATIO
The male to female gender ratio in Maharashtra, as per the 2011 census, was 925 and it was projected to 932 in 2014. At the national level, this ratio increased from 933 to 940. Maharashtra ranks 22nd in the gender ratio. In comparison of projected 2014 gender ratio of 932, the population of women voters is only 887, which is not good for a progressive State like Maharashtra. The SVEEP programme aims at achieving the population of women voters equal to the gender ratio.

YOUTH VOTER RATIO
It appears that only 27.61% of the youth in the age group of 18-19 years of the total population has been registered as voter. This registration is expected to be 100%. The programme aims at 100% registration of youth as voters to increase youth's participation in strengthening Indian democracy.

DEPRIVED SECTIONS/ GROUPS
Although Maharashtra is a progressive State, there are some societies and groups whose registration as voters is less than expected. It is SVEEP's objective to increase the representation of such society-groups as voters and is concentrating on cane cutters of Beed district, beedi workers in Solapur district, Badamadia tribals of Gadchiroli district, transgenders in Thane district and defence personnel in Nashik district.

ELECTION PHOTO IDENTITY CARD AND PHOTO ELECTORAL ROLL
With a view of conducting smooth and transparent election, the Election Commission of India has implemented the Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC) for every voter. Earlier the Election Commission of India was only giving photo ID cards but the electoral rolls did not have the voters' photographs, which was making it difficult for voters' identification. In view of this, the Commission has now undertaken the programme of having photograph of every voter in the electoral rolls and aims at achieving 100% Election Photo Identity Card and Photo Electoral Roll (PER).

URBAN APATHY
While taking the review of figures of earlier elections, it has been noticed that in comparison of urban and rural voters and votes, there is less percentage of urban voters as well as votes. The SVEEP also intends to remove this apathy from urban areas.

PLANS TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES
It is essential to plan out the means to achieve the set targets of the SVEEP Programme. While doing so following steps are being taken.

MAHARASHTRA'S POPULATION

Census	2011	2014 (Projected)
Population	11,23,72,972	11,72,91,577
Males	5,83,61,972	6,07,17,916
Females	5,40,11,575	5,65,80,577
Females per 1,000 males	925	932
Population of 18 yrs and above	7,62,56,299	7,94,44,170
Urban population (%)	45.2	45.2
Rural population (%)	54.8	54.8

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

The SVEEP programme is expected to be implemented across the State, especially among youth, women, deprived sections /groups and difficult regions. Already a number of welfare schemes are being implemented for every sector of the society by various departments of Government of Maharashtra. Accordingly, the Government machinery is in place to reach right down to village level. Hence, there is no need to launch an independent agency to undertake SVEEP programmes. Instead, State and district level department and other government/non-government machinery have been made partners in the SVEEP programme.

DISTRICT LEVEL COMMITTEE

At district level, a committee comprising heads of various department like rural development, urban development, social justice, tribal, women and child welfare, industry and labour, coopera-tion, information and publicity, boards and other departments has been constituted. This committee, besides Government departments, also include representatives of various institutions under the Central Government like banks, post offices, industrial organisations, NCCs, NSSs and other NGOs. An appeal has been made to all Government departments to include this programme as and when other schemes are being implemented. The district level committee would decide programmes and projects to be taken up by various agencies in the district.

STATE LEVEL COMMITTEE

A State level committee under the chairmanship of Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra, has been set up to review and guide the programmes to be undertaken by the district level committee. This committee includes Administrative heads of various Government departments. The committee also includes institutions like the NCC, NSS, NYKS and other Government organisations.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND CAMPUS AMBASSADORS

Being a progressive State, Maharashtra has a number of educational institutions, boards, and universities. A special campaign has been undertaken to enhance participation of youth. The number of youth voters in the 18-19 year age group, when compared to their population, is less. Hence, registrar of

Rally to create awareness among voters organised under SVEEP Programme

every university has been made 'Campus Ambassador' to increase this ratio. Principals of every college have been appointed as SVEEP Nodal Officers. Besides, these principals have been directed to appoint meritorious and interested students as campus ambassadors. They have been entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that every student in the age group of 18-22 years is registered as a voter. This will result in increasing the registration of eligible youth as voters.

WOMEN ENROLLMENT

In view of the fact the number of women voters in the total electorate is less, help is being taken from organisations working in women's sectors. The lower percentage of women voters has been attributed to certain traditions, male dominated culture, lack of literacy among women. Efforts are on to tackle these issues. Hence, for increasing women enrollment in the election process, under SVEEP door to door survey was carried out by Anganwadi Sevikas, Aasha workers. Messages were given to all representatives to enroll all eligible women electors, maps of polling areas were prepared so that no house was left and at the meetings of the Mahila Bachat Gat Form 6 was distributed.

The women's Self Help Groups, which have penetrated deep into the villages, through them, women in villages are informed about the democracy through regular dialogues. Special efforts are taken through Anganwadis to educate women to become voters. These efforts have definitely helped to increase women enrollment. Besides these, exhibitions, rangolis, food competitions are organised to increase women ratio in elections.

The SVEEP programme aims at achieving 100 per cent registration of voters

Through SHGs women in villages are informed about the democracy through regular dialogues

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS

Maharashtra is one of the leading industrial States. A large number of public sector and private industries exist in the State. Cooperation of industrial organisations and MIDC has been sought so that maximum registration of organised and unorganised workers is ensured and that they are encouraged to exercise their franchise. Industrial establishments have been directed to grant paid leave to every worker, organised or unorganised, on the day of polling.

BANKS

Banks exist not only in every village in Maharashtra but also in difficult regions also. Hence, their cooperation is being sought to implement SVEEP programme. The banks have been urged that they undertake awareness programmes through their branches and publicity departments.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ELECTIONS (MAHARASHTRA)

Lok Sabha constituencies (Rajya Sabha members 20)	48
Assembly constituencies (Vidhan Parishad Members – 78)	288
No. of polling centres	89,479
Registered voters (as on 1.1.2014)	7,89,66,642
Male voters	4,18,41,934
Female voters	3,71,24,438
Other voters (transgender)	270
E P Ration (%)	67.33
18 + EP ratio (%)	99.40
Gender ratio	887.25
Ratio of 18-19 years age-group population in proportion to total population (%)	3.96
Ratio of 18-19 age group voters in proportion to total population (%)	1.35
Electoral Photo Identity Card –EPIC (%)	91.42
Photo Electoral Roll—PER (%)	90.32

POST OFFICE

Like the banks, post offices too have their branches in distant places in Maharashtra. The postal department machinery too can contribute in creating awareness about democracy among the voters. It has been decided to make maximum use of the department to reach the masses through their postal material.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

A large number of Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and Non Government Organisations (NGOs) are coming forward to create awareness among the voters through social work. These CSOs and NGOs, on directives of the Election Commission of India, are being made partners. As of date, around 100 such organisations have been made partners in the programme. Their work in propagating the importance of democratic process among the public, without seeking any financial assistance, is laudable. However, a written guarantee is sought from them that they are not associated with any political party or any political party worker, directly or indirectly and that they would not undertake their publicity.

MEDIA

Even though cooperation from the Government and non-government organisations is being taken, the media will still play a major role in propagating the importance of democracy to the public. Hence, the use of print and electronic media is being made. Radio, TV, daily newspapers, cinema, cable TV, malls, multiplexes, State transport buses, railway station, bus depots, hoardings, mobile vans like mediums are being extensively used.

PROMINENT PERSONALITIES

Appeals through from prominent personalities from Maharashtra are being requested to encourage the public for registering themselves as voters and to enhance their participation in the election process. Appeals to the general public have been made through noted nuclear scientist Dr Anil Kakodkar, social activist couple Dr. Mandakini and Dr. Prakash Amte, litterateur Madhu Mangesh Karnik, actress Mrunal Kulkarni, actor Pandhrinath alias Paddy Kamble, retired IAS officer Aziz Khan, world champion shooter Rahi Sarnobat, Olympian Veerdhawan Khade and Dr Tatyarao Lahane, Dean, J. J. Hospital. We are proud to note that Dr. Kakodkar is the Padmavibhushan and Maharashtra Bhushan Awardee and Dr. Amte, Mr. Karnik and Mr. Lahane are Padmashri Awardees.

YOUTH VOTERS

The low percentage of youth participation is due to mainly fierce competition in today's era, ignorance about process of registering themselves as voters, more emphasis on education and employment etc. Hence, their awareness is essential and therefore,

a) Meetings, Workshops
Special discussions, symposia are organised to enlighten the youths.

b) Programmes
The youth are being made

aware of the democracy through elocution and debate competitions at college level. Besides, efforts are also made to increase their numbers as voters through sports competitions, rallies.

URBAN APATHY

Majority of people living in urban areas are well off socially and financially. They are not much concerned about which government comes to power, as they feel it would not have much impact on them. It is because of this feeling, they take advantage of leave on the polling day and go on holiday tour instead of casting their votes. This results in lesser voting in urban areas. To tackle this issue,

a) Hoardings at Particular Spots

Hoardings are being put up on main conrners and squares on busy traffic roads to highlight the importance of becoming a voter and casting votes.

b) Publicity

Urban voters are being educated through TV, cable and electronic media. For urban voters messages are put up on social media like facebook, twitter and SMSs to overcome the urban apathy towards voting.

RURAL VOTERS

Ignorance about the democratic process, high rate of illiteracy, poor living standards and lack of means of transport and communication are the factors resulting in lower percentage of voting.

a) Folk Art

The rural folks are being enlightened through traditional bhajans and

Cultural programmes organised under SVEEP

keertans on the importance of democracy.

b) Gram Panchayat

Democracy is being propagated through gram panchayats, meetings.

c) Cooperative Societies

An awareness is being created through the cooperative societies in the rural areas.

DEPRIVED SECTIONS/ GROUPS

There is a special focus on the deprived sections-groups in five districts. A direct dialogue is being established with the society and groups by organising meetings at such places and efforts are made to bring them into the democratic process.

OUTCOME OF SVEEP

a) 18+ EP Ratio

As per the voters list of 1.1.2013 the EP Ratio which, as per the 2009 census was 96.61%, is now 98.34%. During the revision of electoral rolls, the names of duplicate and bogus voters' were deleted. Also, under the SVEEP programme, a large scale awareness campaign is being undertaken. This would definitely result in higher percentage in voting.

b) Gender Ratio

The voting percentage of women when compared to total electorate is still less, expected results have not yet achived.

Hence, special attention is being paid towards this aspect.

c) Youth Voter

Of the total population on 1.1.2013, the youth voters of 18 to 19 years of age were 0.75 %. During the last period of 2013-2014, record setting 8.25 lakh youth voters in the age group of 18-19 years have been added. With this addition, as on 1.1.2014, they are now 1.35% of population in the roll. The expected objective has not been achieved yet. Hence, special efforts are being taken in this area.

d) EPIC & PER Ratio

As on 1.1.2013, the EPIC ratio was 85.62%., while the PER ratio was 81.59%. Which is now on 1.1.2014 91.42% and 90.32% respectively.

Considering the above results, the SVEEP II programme is definitely proving out to be a huge success. And in the comming years we are sure that the targeted objects would be achieved. We appeal to all that though the programme is being implemented by the State Government, every citizen is expected to offer constructive support. This will further strengthen Indian democracy, the biggest in the world. Keeping this mind, every Indian eligible citizen should become a voter and exercise their right to vote. ■

The SVEEP aims to increase participation of deprived sections/ groups

Understanding the Attitudinal Approach of Voters

To identify the gaps in previous voters' education interventions as well as in obtaining a deeper insight into the psyche of the target audience, the Baseline study on the Knowledge, Attitude, Behaviour, Belief and Practices of the voters in the State was carried out, says Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and State SVEEP Nodal Officer, **Shirish Mohod**.

Voters' participation in the democratic and electoral process is integral to the successful running of any democracy and the very basis of wholesome democratic elections. Thus, it becomes an integral part of election management. Voter is the central actor in democratic election. There is little of gap between what the voters 'should know' and what they 'actually know' in important areas like registration, EPIC/ identity proofs, Polling Station location, use of EVMS, timings of the poll, dos & don'ts with regard to Model Code of Conduct, use of money/ muscle and liquor power, by candidates or their associates to influence vulnerable sections of electorate.

To identify the gaps in previous voters' education interventions as well as in obtaining a deeper insight into the psyche of the target audience ,the Baseline study on the Knowledge, Attitude, Behaviour, Belief and Practices [KABBP] of the voters in the State was carried out . As per the directions of the Election Commission of India, the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES) was entrusted to do a survey of Electors on various aspects. Accordingly the DES did the survey and submitted their detailed report of the survey to the Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra State. The survey results are based on the data collected from 2,645 rural and 3,115 urban sample voters from 288 Assembly constituencies in the State. Here are the important findings of this survey. The Baseline Survey KABBP was conducted during the period of 15th to 25th June, 2013.

From each State Legislative Assembly Constituency, two polling centres have been selected. If the constituency spreads in both the rural and urban areas, in such constituencies one polling centre from rural and urban areas each has been selected with simple random sampling method. If the constituency is spreads only in urban or rural areas, in such cases two polling centres have been selected by simple random sampling without replacement method. Accordingly, in all 576 Polling centres have been selected.

SELECTION OF VOTERS

From each polling centre 2 male and 2 female voters in the age group of 18 to 25 years and 3 male and 3 female voters having age above 25 years have been selected by simple random sampling method by using sampling random number table. Accord-ingly, 10 voters from each polling centre totaling to 5,760 voters have been selected.

EPIC/VOTER ID

• Of the total registered voters in the State, 91 per cent voters are having Voter's card.

- The major reason for not having voter's card is that voter did not get information when they are making.
- Family members of about 13 per cent of voters are not enrolled as voters.
- About one-third sample voters reported that lack of valid documents as the reason of non enrollment of their family members.
- About 81 per cent voters reported that, long procedure was the main problem witnessed for getting EPIC.
- About 57 per cent voters reported Ration Card as an alternative ID used for voting.

About 72 per cent voters reported that, local persons visited to their house to help for enrollment

RESPONDENT'S PROFILE
- Maximum numbers of constituencies (75) are in Konkan Division.
- The Annual Income (Econ-omic status) of about 62 per cent voters is less than 1 lakh.
- About one-third sample voters are having Labourer / cultivators/ Agricultural and allied activities as their occupation.
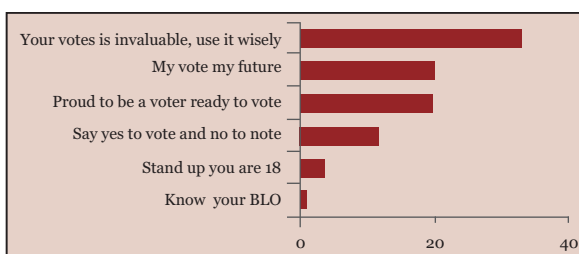- About one-fourth sample voters are BPL ration card holders.

VOTER EDUCATION AND CAMPAIGN
- About 63 per cent voters were not aware of voter / election related campaign of Election Commission of India.
- The most effective source of election related messages / information was Doordarshan followed by Newspaper.
- 'Your Vote Is Invaluable, Use It Wisely' is the most appealing / motivating message.
- The main places where the respondents have seen the educational message posters are near Government offices,

market places, bus stand etc. Besides the rallies and vans giving messages related to registration and voting systems are also seen by the voters.
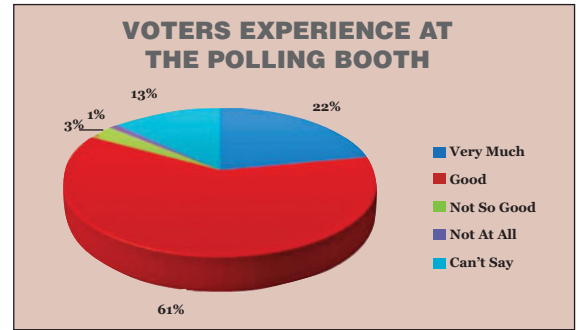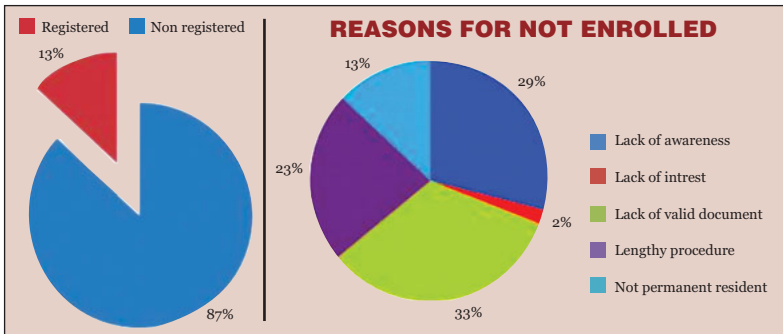
SOURCE OF AWARENESS

Source	Value
Doordarshan	61
Newspaper	57
Posters hoarding & Publicity materials	37
Local cable TV	17
College educations Institutions	10
Govt. offices	8
Private satellite channel	7
NGO & Civil Society group	5
All India radio	5
FM channel	4
Any other	3
Video Vans	2

MOST APPEALING/MOTIVATING CONTENTS

- Your votes is invaluable, use it wisely
- My vote my future
- Proud to be a voter ready to vote
- Say yes to vote and no to note
- Stand up you are 18
- Know your BLO

Out of the total registered sample voters the proportion of voters reporting reason of voting as "it was my duty / right" was 70

REVENUE DIVISION WISE NUMBER OF SAMPLE VOTERS

Marital Status	Rural			Urban			State		
	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
Never married	31	14	22	38	23	31	35	19	27
Currently married	68	78	74	61	71	66	64	74	69
Widowed	1	8	4	1	6	3	1	7	4
Divorced/ separated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

REGIONWISE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE VOTERS BY MARITAL STATUS

Division	Rural			Urban			State		
	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
Konkan	225	225	450	525	525	1,050	750	750	1,500
Nashik	253	266	519	209	212	421	462	478	940
Pune	294	304	598	282	280	262	576	584	1,160
Aurangabad	220	231	451	235	234	469	455	465	920
Amaravati	157	155	312	145	143	288	302	298	600
Nagpur	161	154	315	160	165	325	321	319	640
State	1,310	1,335	2,645	1,556	1,559	3,115	2,866	2,894	5,760

REASONS FOR NOT ENROLLED

Registered 13%
Non registered 87%

- Lack of awareness 29%
- Lack of intrest 2%
- Lack of valid document 33%
- Lengthy procedure 23%
- Not permanent resident 13%

VOTERS EXPERIENCE AT THE POLLING BOOTH

- Very Much 22%
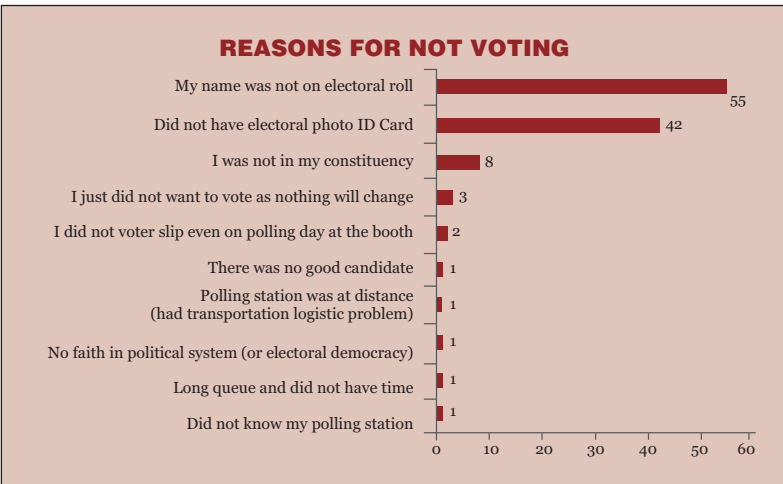- Good 61%
- Not So Good 3%
- Not At All 1%
- Can't Say 13%

ELECTION EXPERIENCE

- About 62 per cent voters reported that their experience in last assembly election and at the polling booth was good.
- About 66 per cent voters reported that there was no security threat at all during election.

Difficulties Faced

Difficulty	Value
No separate queue for senior citizen	44
Long queue	40
Lack of facility including drinking water/toilet/ramp	31
Difficulties in getting my voter slip at facilitation centre	24
No guidance from polling personnel	17
Difficulties in locality my polling station	16
Any other Specify	9
Coercion/threat by political-party booth operator	5

- About 44 per cent voters reported that there was sufficient deployment of police force.
- About 95 per cent of voters did not face any difficulty in voting.

REASONS FOR NOT VOTING

Reason	Value
My name was not on electoral roll	55
Did not have electoral photo ID Card	42
I was not in my constituency	8
I just did not want to vote as nothing will change	3
I did not voter slip even on polling day at the booth	2
There was no good candidate	1
Polling station was at distance (had transportation logistic problem)	1
No faith in political system (or electoral democracy)	1
Long queue and did not have time	1
Did not know my polling station	1

VOTING INFLUENCES

- The baseline survey on Knowledge, Attitude, Beha-viour, Belief and Practices (KABBP) shows that 80 per cent of sample voters cast their vote in last election.
- The highest turnout was reported in Yavatmal district and the lowest in Wardha district.
- Out of the total registered sample voters the proportion of voters reporting reason of voting as "it was my duty / right" was 70.
- The proportion of voters reported that they have voted because of repeated appeal and advertisement by Election Commission was 15.
- Of the total sample voters who have not voted, the proportion of voters reported that they have not voted as their name was not on electoral roll were 55.
- Of the total sample voters who have not voted, the proportion of voters reported that they have not voted because they did not have electoral photo ID card was 42.
- The most influencing factor that affected the voting preference was the candidate, while family was at second position. ◼

REASONS OF VOTING

Reason	Value
It was my duty/right	70
Candidate was good	27
Because of repeated appeal and advertisement by Election commission	15
Head of family said to vote	15
I got registered in electoral roll	14
Because of enabling environment (Free and Fair) created by Election commission	14
I am Political party sympathizer	13
I got my vote slip	10
Wanted to defeat a particular candidate and/or a political party	7
Influenced by friends	6
Candidate visited me	5
Candidate was of my choice and form community and religion	3
Any Other (Specify)	1
Casted vote due to threat or coercion	1

Action Plan for Changing Voters Approach

The apathy of the voter costs the country dearly as undeserving candidates, criminals and goons get elected. It is this passiveness towards politics which is responsible for horse trading, nepotism, blatant corruption among other goings on in the power corridors of the elected representatives. But SVEEP initiative is playing a big role in changing the trend, says **Sangeeta Choughule**, Deputy District Election Officer of Kolhapur.

One of the biggest challenges facing the Indian democracy is voter's apathy and indifference. This attitude results in poor voter turnout at the time of election and does not augur well for the democracy. In fact the range of voting turnout across States, and variations in the same State in different elections, is so large that it defeats any quick analysis.

The common refrain for avoiding to exercise electoral franchise is utter cynicism against the politicians and the government. " Why should I waste my time voting when I know all the politicians are of no use or " the whole system is corrupt and nothing is going to change" is the common attitude. It is easier to hold the political class guilty and refrain from voting rather than making an informed choice. Many prefer to treat Election Day as a holiday.

In fact if we compare that to some other democracies that follow the Parliamentary system of governance for example the UK, Sweden or Belgium we will see that we have a poor voter turnout. Even Bangladesh, a relatively new country with dodgy record has a better voter turnout compared to India.

The Centre Right India (CRI), an internet-based subsidiary of Kovai Media Private Limited (KMPL), Coimbatore says "if one looks at the voter turn out for the last four Lok Sabha elections,

SVEEP is a programme of multi intervention in different modes and mediums designed to increase voters awareness

Rahi Sarnobat, World Champion Shooter

one will notice that Indian voter turn out has hovered around the 58% mark and this has been the trend since the birth of the republic, give or take a few percentage points. In fact 63.75% voter turn out the highest ever so far was recorded in 1957 followed by the second highest of 63.53% in 1984".

This has prompted the Election Commission of India to adopt a sustained and Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) strategy to increase people's participation in the electoral process. SVEEP is basically an election management operation aimed at increasing enrolment of eligible citizens in electoral list and motivate every registered voter to vote by invoking various communication interventions and targeted programmes. It is a programme of multi intervention in different modes and mediums designed to increase voters awareness. This participation in the electoral process is designed according to the socio-economic, cultural and demographic profiles of the State as well as the history of electoral participation.

The SVEEP undertakes the following activities: Dissemination of Information, Motivation Message, and Approach (Strategy). The main objectives include increasing the registration of voters, specially women, newly eligible voters, youth and socially marginalised sections; improving the voter turnout by way of motivation; photo inclusion in the electoral roll; issue of EPIC; and ethical voting.

In Maharashtra for the past three years, this drive is being undertaken from the level of Chief Electoral Officer, to booth level officials at the village level. Currently, the SVEEP Phase II is on. The second phase for a five-year duration (2013-2018) began from April 1, 2013. As compared to Maharashtra's population and the registered voters, the population in 2014 is around 11,76,69,050 (inclusive of boys/girls under 18 years of age) and the total voters are 7,89,66642, which is 67.11 per cent. Registering all those above the age of 18 years as voters is essential to strengthen democracy. The number of women per 1,000 population in Maharashtra is 932, which means that same number of women should be reflected in the voters list.

The campaign has been chalked out at State and district level through youth organisations, government's information and publicity department, educational institutions and universities to ensure maximum participation of the public. The plan has been finalised under the stewardship of Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra, Shri Nitin Gadre and different projects are being implemented in every district and, in fact, among various social structure, culture and geographical characteristics in every constituency. They have been given freedom to make the scheme a success. It is a fact that disabled, transgenders and migrating people have always been left out of the voters lists

for some reason or the other. Efforts are also being made to register such voters and efforts are getting positive response from the public. Children in the age-group of 14-17 years, who will be the future voters, are being enlightened with the electoral process. In addition to this "Voters' Help Centres" have been opened in every taluka to provide maximum help to the voters.

The SVEEP campaign aims at attracting maximum people to register as voters till the elections are announced. Some sections of the educated class often try to keep themselves out of the electoral process. Hence, implementing SVEEP is a bigger challenge before the officers at regional level. The electoral machinery in Maharashtra is making all out efforts through posters, radio, TV, essay competition, processions, SMS campaigns, NGOs, lectures in schools-colleges to make the campaign a success. It is the cumulative result of all these efforts that around 8.25 lakh youth voters in the age group of 18-22 years have been registered during the period of one year across the State and this number will continue to rise.

No doubt we are living in an era of technology more importantly an IT world. However, still it is difficult to trace, track and cover all the eligible voters due to many reasons including geographical, cultural, socio-economic issues.

There is a need of proper planning, innovative ideas in the whole process of awareness creation, developing proper schedule of events and preparing calendar

of operations of plans is a paramount aspect in planning process. More advertising is not going to bring any output to the neglected and uncovered voters. What is needed is specific approach, with specific mode, with specific language by specific people. For instance to cover nomadic women voters, advertising or display of hoardings or wall painting with slogans have failed to deliver the results. Hence in people approach method, key people who can plan at their own level using their own resources like NGO's, co-operative societies, who can devise process and set procedure to make an awareness campaign and perform to motivate register the names of uncovered should be identified.

A good way of creating awareness among the rural woman about the need for exercising the electoral

- Imparting voting awareness is not only a right but a responsibility towards National Cause to propagate democracy.
- Slogans like "You have every right to choose your leader by vote" make the difference to sensitise the people.
- If you do not consider anyone as appropriate candidate you can contest elections yourself.
- Democracy is a real ornament of our country.

franchise is through "Ukhana" (poetic way of introducing husbands name), organising Mangala Gouri, clippings and advertisements on local cables, jingles on all ST bus stands, school drama competition on election procedure etc.

Overall, by implementing the SVEEP at district level, will definately motivate the voters to exercise their franchise to increase the poll percentage. Because of the efforts of the district administration under SVEEP, the voters' turnout percentage will definitely increase. ■

It is the cumulative result of the efforts taken under SVEEP that around 60 lakh new voters have been registered across the State

Nurturing Democracy Through Voters' Participation

Every citizen above the age of 18 years should get enrolled as voter and maximum people should participate in voting without any inducement, allurement or threat says, **Sunil D. Mali** Deputy District Election Officer, Ahmednagar.

Election is the time when the people can express their disenchantment with the people in power and vote for a change. This aspect is the cornerstone of a vibrant democracy. The foundation of the Election Commission of

India was laid in the belief that a strong democracy mandates all eligible citizens becoming voters and then ethically participating in elections. The Election Commission of India (ECI) gave the slogan "Greater Participation for a Stronger Democracy", galvanizing the entire State machinery to launch numerous initiatives to translate the slogan into ground reality. A robust electoral system is the foundation of democracy and voters are like bricks in the foundation. It is thus imperative that every citizen above the age of 18

years should get enrolled as voter and maximum voters should participate in voting and should do so without any inducement, allurement or threat.

It is important to remember that though voters are 'supreme', real power stems from their being enlightened citizens. More the number of enlightened voters, better the selection of their representatives. Voting stimulates public participation in the democratic process. But not much was being done to enthuse the voter till these elections. A large section of society was not much interested in participating in election. Lack of services and poor facilitation led to poor enrollment.

The biggest challenge was to make each voter understand the value of one's vote. We should accept this challenge to project voting as one's responsibility towards society. For the first time ever, emphasis was laid on voters' education and empowerment in the summary revision programme.

To this end, a campaign 'Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation' nicknamed SVEEP was launched.

SVEEP paved the way for the electoral machinery to build numerous partnerships. Main strategies as follows:

INVOLVEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES

The Electoral Registration Officer and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers took the meetings of all the principal of the colleges and gave a plan of action for registration of students who will be completing 18 years of age on 1.1.2014. Electoral Registration Officers and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers firstly briefed the students about the importance of registration as a voter and voting in the coming elections. Form 6 was given to each student and the filled forms were collected and given to concerned Booth Level Officers for verifying the details and including their names in the Pink Pads. A coordinator was appointed in every college who formed a team with student volunteers. A help desk was set up in all the colleges and drop boxes were also placed. NSS and NCC worked as lead agencies and facilitator for voter registration.

> **The Election Commission of India gave the slogan "Greater Participation for a Stronger Democracy"**

VOTER AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

A large number of cultural programmes highlighting the essence of democracy and importance of voter's registration and voter's participation were organized in universities and colleges by students.

BRAND AMBASSADOR

Chief Electoral Officer appointed well known Marathi actors Mrunal Kulkarni, Paddy Kamble as brand ambassadors for motivating the citizens for registration as voters. Along with these actors well known scientist Anil Kakodkar, well known Eye surgeon and social activist Dr Tatyarao Lahane also took initiatives through different advertisement campaign for improving registration percentage in the State. An innovative initiative, it led to a definite and positive increase in voters registration.

VOTERS' HELP CENTRES

In all tehsils of Maharashtra, Voter Help Centres were established. Voters Help Centres, provided substantive and one-stop solution to all registration woes; for instance, inclusion of voters, EPICs etc.

PARTNERSHIP WITH MEDIA/ ASSOCIATES

A focussed media campaign in print, radio and electronic was launched in a big way. Numerous radio jingles and TV commercials became popular among masses. Along with this all the Cinema Houses broadcast voter registration advertisements during break as well as before the start of the movie.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PSUS, NGOS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Several banks and other organizations namely SBI, PNB, BOB, BSNL, Allahabad Bank, associated themselves actively in the voters' registration programmes. They had set up Voters' Help Desk in their branches. The Art of Living, Social organization participated in a big way for motivating the youths in voter registration.

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE VISITS BY BLOS

Booth Level Officers (BLOs) contacted voters at their doorsteps for identification of the left-out voters, registration and spreading awareness about their rights and responsibilities.

PRODUCTION OF AUDIO AND VIDEO MATERIALS

Making use of the photographs and video clippings from districts of Maharashtra, several publicity films on voting were developed which were subsequently used for voters' awareness programmes.

NATIONAL VOTERS DAY PLAN

The Election Commission has declared 25th January as 'National Voters Day' to mark the importance of voters in Indian democracy. Public functions were organized at all polling station locations and ERO and AERO offices with main function at Collector offices.

SVEEP paved the way for the electoral machinery to build numerous partnerships

"Verify Your Name in the Voters' List! You Can Enroll Even Now !!"

Dr. Mandakini Amte and Dr. Prakash Amte, Renowned Social Worker and Padmashree Awardee

PROUD TO BE VOTER... READY TO VOTE

Only possessing an Election Photo Identity Card is not sufficient but one has to ensure name in the Voters' List. Those whose names are not in the Voters' List will not be able to vote.

Please fill-up Form No. 6 to enroll your name in the Voters' List. In case your name has been deleted, you may fill fresh Form No. 6 or Submit your objection.

To vote in the Lok Sabha - 2014 elections, citizens may submit their forms at the Voters' Help Centres (VHC) Of their Assembly Constituency, preferably 10 days, before the last date of filing nominations by the Candidates.

Kindly visit office of the Collector and District Election Officer or visit our websites
https://www.ceo.maharashtra.gov.in or
https://www.ceomaharashtra.nic.in
(A) To see the Final Voters' List (qualifying date 01/01/2014) and to verify your name in that Voters' List;
(B) To see the list of deleted entries;
(C) To get the information about your Assembly Constituency and Polling Station details;
(D) To see the list of Voters' Help Centres (VHC)

Published in the Public Interest by the Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra State

Cultural programmes highlighting the essence of democracy and importance of voter's registration and voter's participation were organized in universities and colleges

IT BASED FACILITATION

The Election Commission of India is committed to facilitating participation by citizens in the electoral process. Under the 'Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS)', any citizen can register his grievances which are monitored online.

SMS CAMPAIGN

Taking advantage of already available database of two lakh eighty nine thousand cell phone users of BSNL in the Ahmednagar district, A message " Please visit www.ahmednagar.nic.in to see your name in the voters list. If the name is not there, you can apply to tehsil office/ polling station." was sent by Collector, Ahmednagar to all the cell users of BSNL for registering their name in the voters list.

FOCUS ON WOMEN

Focus on the women, orientation sessions for the grassroots level women workers like anganwadi's, Asha's, ANM's and primary school teachers were conducted to further sensesitize the rural women. The names of these women were checked in the voters list during house to house survey. Form 6 was filled from those women not having their name in the voters list. We had better results due to these innovative ideas because we got more Form 6 from women than men. This is big achievement for the State.

INVOLVEMENT OF VILLAGE LEVEL FUNCTIONARIES

All the village level officers like talathi, gramsevak, mandal adhikari, anganwadi sevikas, vistar adhikari along with police patil, sarpanch and all grampanchayat members were involved in voter registration campaign.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

After declaration of 2011 census figures the special drive was conducted to calculate the village wise gap in Elector Population Ratio (EPR) and gender ratio. This gap was calculated on the basis of expected population growth as on 1.1.2014. As the villagewise census data was available along with partywise voters data within village was compared with census figures for calculating gap in EP Ratio and Gender ratio. After calculating this gap strategy was made to mitigate this gap by identifying the remaining voters through house to house visit by Booth Level Officers along with all village functionaries mentioned above. This strategy worked well for us as we received highest number of applications in the State.

REGISTRATION OF THIRD GENDER PERSONS AS VOTERS

Special efforts were made to include a third gender persons in the democratic process by way of including their names in the electoral roll. Though the number of forms received are less, this is new beginning for them to use their right in the democratic set up. ∎

Inclusive Way of Strengthening Democracy

Ensuring participation of the groups like the transgender, sex workers, beedi workers, sugarcane cutters and the tribals from Gadchiroli and Chandrapur districts of Maharashtra in the electoral process has been a challenging but fruitful task says, **Smt. Geetanjali Baviskar**, Deputy District Electoral Officer.

As a part of election management, the Election Commission has taken an important step to include citizens from the marginalized and excluded groups on the electoral roll to strengthen democracy and it has started showing promising results.

The significant move includes ensuring participation of the groups like the transgender, sex workers, beedi workers, sugarcane cutters and the tribals from Gadchiroli and Chandrapur districts of Maharashtra in the electoral process.

This is because the Election Commission was aware that political empowerment will remain a distant dream unless all these groups and sections are included in the electoral roll. Voter's participation in the democratic and electoral processes is integral to the successful running of any democracy and the very basis of wholesome democratic elections. Thus, it becomes an integral part of election management.

To improve participation of all sections of the electorate, awareness levels needed to be enhanced, especially amongst the newly eligible youth, the uneducated, residents of inaccessible and remote areas, socially and economically weaker/deprived sections of society.

Election Commission of India envisaged systematic, strategic and scientific processes in understanding the voter participation and engagement dynamics so as to facilitate the processes of increased and informed participation.

Large segments/sections of the electorate who were not covered by the formal educational system or those who had developed an apathetic attitude or those who are physically cut off from the mainstream due to various reasons needed to be brought under the ambit of focused voters education.

The reason why no political party considers the transgender community a vote bank is connected to the way it is perceived by society at large. The transgenders are unfortunately not seen as a section which has something to contribute to the society.

Similarly the tribals and the beedi workers and sugarcane

> The transgenders are unfortunately not seen as a section which has some thing to contribute to the society

cutters are ignored lot mainly because they are illiterate, live in inaccessible places. For instance Beed is famous for its seasonal migration, especially from its dry hilly region.

Beed District having drought prone area, sugarcane cutters migrate in the month of February every year to sugar factories. It was observed from the figures of voter's turnout of last general elections which was held in April 2009, that due to migration of sugarcane cutters, the voter turnout percentage was less in the district.

So the enrollment of those sugarcane cutters was encouraged and their names were included in the Electoral Roll. This will facilitate them to get EPICS which they can use for voting purpose as many of them don't have other documents required for identification. In Beed District 95329 Forms are received during the current Special Summary Revision Programme.

In Mumbai Suburban District, in Assembly Constituency No. 157 Bhandup (W) two excluded groups communities are identified-Transgenders and Sex Workers. With the help of NGO named Premkiran Transformation Centre which is working for transgenders and sex workers, Electoral Registration Officer 157 organized meeting with NGO and appealed them to enroll their names in the Electoral Roll.

Similarly steps have been taken to include the tribals of Gadchiroli and Chandrapur districts in the voters list. Gadchiroli District was created on August 26, 1982 by the separation of Gadchiroli and Sironcha tehsils from Chandrapur District. As of 2011 it is the second least populous district of Maharashtra after Sindhudurg The district is divided into six sub-divisions, which are further divided into 12 talukas. The district is currently a part of the Red Corridor.

Dhanora, Etapalli, Aheri and Sironcha talukas in the eastern part of the district are covered by forest. Hills are found in Bhamragad, Tipagad, Palasgad and Surjagad area. This area is mainly inhabitated by tribals.

According to the 2011 census Gadchiroli district has a population of 1,071,795 The district has a population density of 74 inhabitants per square kilometre (190 /sq mi). Gadchiroli has a sex ratio of 975 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 70.06%. Scheduled tribe population in the district is 3,71,696. Which is 38.3% of total population. Seven languages are spoken in the district, namely, Gondi, Madiya, Marathi, Hindi, Telugu, Bengali, Chattisgadi

The district is categoried as a tribal and undeveloped district and most of the land is covered with forest and hills. Forests cover more than 78% of the geographical area of the district. The district is known for Naxalite activities; Naxalites from the Communist Party of India (Maoist) have taken shelter in the dense forests and hills of this district. And this poses greatest challenge before the district administration in reaching out to the people.

MADIA-GONDS

Madia Gonds or Madia are one of the Gond tribes living in Gadchiroli district. They have been granted the status of a Primitive tribal group by the Government of India under its affirmative action or reservation programme. The Madia Gonds are strongly affected by Naxal activities. The Madia Gonds use the self designation Madia, and call the area where they live Madia Desh.

Madias today are doctors, teachers, Government employees. Performance of school going Madia children is on par with other children of the State, a Madia girl student has figured in the merit list of candidates at the State level.

MAJOR CHALLENGES

The district administration is aware of the importance of participation of tribals in electoral process to fight anti-democratic forces in district. So increased enrollment of tribals in electoral roll is a first step in affirming the faith of people in democratic process. There are many impediments in this tasks. There are cultural, linguistic barriers not to mention the vast geographic expanse of the district and sparse population of tribals living in inaccessible areas. Besides, in sensitive areas reaching out to tribals is itself daunting task. The seasonal migration of tribals for collection tendu leaves is the single most important factor for low voter registration as well as l ow voter turnout in these areas.

STRATEGY

To get over the problem of low voter registration in tribal inhabited areas, an elaborate polling station wise analysis of low voter registration Polling Stations was done. These Polling Stations were inevitably located in tribal dominated areas in tehsil like Bhamaragad, Ettapalli, Dhanora and Korchi. Such low registration Polling Stations were targeted for specific SVEEP interventions that were local and culture specific like distributing leaflets in Madia language. Organisations like

'Art of living' were involved in SVEEP campaigns especially to spread awareness among tribals. Confidence building measures by visits of ERO and AERO to sensitive areas was undertaken. To top it all, a no frills approach of directly contacting potential voters was devised.

BRAND AMBASSADORS

The Bhamragad Taluka, where the Madia Gond Adivasis live, is the heart of naxal activities in Gadchiroli districts. This is where Lok Biradari Prakalp, an NGO working in the fields of health and education, operates. It was established in 1973. Dr. Prakash Amte and Dr. Mandakini Amte are working for the Lok Biradari Prakalp . They are the brand ambassadors for electoral registration purpose. They are held in high esteem by madias and this has helped in increasing the participation of the tribals in electoral process.

OUTCOME

Over the years, general trend has been an increasing one with respect to the number of male and female voters who who are registered in electoral roll. In summary revision of electoral rolls in October 2013 with 1.1.2014 as a qualifying date Gadchiroli district has witnessed a sort of trend reversal in respect of tribal voters registrations. This is mainly due to SVEEP interventions in tribal areas. Bhamaragad tehsil which is home to madia gonds and the worst naxal affected tehsil in Gadchiroli districts has shown highest percentage point increase in E.P. ratio in the district i.e. 13.17% followed by Korchi, another naxal affected taluka, which has shown an increase of 10.51%.

The increased voter registration in tribal areas is an outcome of tribal specific SVEEP interventions undertaken by district administration. But in absolute number much needs to be done in these areas and the district administration is geared up to extend the gains made during summary revision of October 2013. ■

Organisations like 'Art of living' were involved in SVEEP campaigns especially to spread awareness among tribals

Putting a Cap on Poll Spending

The object of the provision limiting the expenditure is two fold. In the first place, it should be open to any individual or any political party, howsoever small, to be able to contest an election on a footing of equality. The other objective is to eliminate, the influence of big money in the electoral process says, **Neelesh Gatne**, Deputy Secretary and Joint Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra.

M ounting influence of money power in elections is not a new phenomenon but has been existing since several decades back. The only difference is that in the recent times, it has become extremely pronounced.

To curb this practice, Section 77(1) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 makes it mandatory for every candidate to the House of the People or a State Legislative Assembly to keep a separate and correct account of all expenditure incurred or authorized by him or by his election agent, between the date on which he was nominated and the date of declaration of the result of election, both dates inclusive.

Rule 90 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 prescribes varying limits of election expenditure for Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies in each of the States and Union Territories. For Maharashtra presently ceiling on expenditure for candidates of Parliamentary Constituencies is Rs. 70 lakh and for candidates of Assembly Constituencies is Rs. 28 lakh. The beneficial object sought to be achieved by making the incurring or authorizing of election expenditure in excess of the prescribed limit as a corrupt practice was elucidated by the Supreme Court in Kanwar Lal Gupta vs Amar Nath Chawla (AIR 1975 SC 308), as follows:

"…The object of the provision limiting the expenditure is two fold. In the first place, it should be open to any individual or any political party, howsoever small, to be able to contest an election on a footing of equality with any other individual or political party, howsoever rich and well financed it may be, and no individual or political party should be able to secure an advantage over others by virtue of its superior financial strength….

The other objective of limiting the expenditure is to eliminate, as far as possible, the influence of big money in the electoral process. If there was no limit on expenditure, political parties would go all out for collecting contributions… The pernicious influence of big money would then play a decisive role in controlling the democratic process in the country…."

Limiting election expenditure limits corruption and makes the whole process transparent to ensure that good and honest people contest elections and enter legislature and Parliament

TYPES OF ELECTION EXPENDITURE

Election expenditure can be broadly put in two categories. The first type is the election expenditure, which is allowed under the law for electioneering, subject to it being within the permissible limit. This would include expenditure connected with campaigning like on public meetings, public rallies posters, banners, vehicles, advertisements in print or electronic media etc. The second category of the expenditure is, on items which are not permitted under law. For example, distribution of money, liquor, or any other item to the electors with intent to influence them comes under the definition of bribery and is an offence under the IPC and corrupt practice under the R.P. Act, 1951. The expenditure on such items is illegal. Yet another form of expenditure which is coming to the fore in recent times is on Surrogate Advertisements, paid news etc.

The purpose of election expenditure monitoring is, therefore, twofold. For the first category of expenditure, it must be ensured that all election expenditure on permitted items is truthfully reported and considered while scrutinizing the expenditure account submitted by the candidates. As far as the second category of expenditure including surrogate advertise-ments, paid news etc., is concerned, it is obvious that it will never be reported by the political parties/ candidates. The systems should be robust enough to catch such expenditure as well, and not only include it in the account of election expenditure, but also take action against the wrongdoers under the relevant provisions of the law, including lodging of complaints before the police/ competent magistrate, if required.

For the purpose of maintaining purity of elections, the Election Commission of India has issued a Standard Operating Procedure for Flying Squads, Static Surveillance Teams and Check Posts, constituted for keeping vigil over excessive campaign expenses, distribution of items of bribe in cash or in kind, movement of illegal arms, ammunition, liquor, or antisocial elements etc. in the constituency during election process.

FLYING SQUADS

1. There shall be three or more Flying Squads (FS) in each constituency. The Flying Squads shall start functioning from the date of announcement of election and shall continue till completion of poll.

2. The Flying Squad shall (a) attend to all model code of conduct violations and related complaints; (b) attend to all complaints of threat, intimidation, movement of anti-social elements, liquor, arms and ammunition and large sum of cash for the purpose of bribing of electors etc.; (c) attend to all complaints regarding election expenditure incurred or authorised by the

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LOK SABHA ELECTIONS 2014
### IN MAHARASHTRA IN THREE PHASES

Polling for 48 constituencies in Maharashtra will be held in three phases i.e. on April 10, 17 and 24, 2014.

April 10 (Thursday) - 5 Buldhana, 6 Akola , 7 Amravati, 8 Wardha, 9 Ramtek, 10 Nagpur, 11 Bhandara- Gondiya, 12 Gadchiroli- Chimur, 13 Chandrapur, 14 Yavatmal-Washim.

April 17 (Thursday) - 15 Hingoli , 16 Nanded, 17 Parbhani, 33 Maval , 34 Pune, 35 Baramati, 36 Shirur , 37 Ahmednagar, 38 Shirdi, 39 Beed , 40 Osmanabad, 41 Latur, 42 Solapur, 43 Madha, 44 Sangli, 45 Satara, 46 Ratnagiri – Sindhudurg, 47 Kolhapur, 48 Hatkanangle.

April 24 (Thursday) - 1 Nandurbar, 2 Dhule, 3 Jalgaon, 4 Raver, 18 Jalna, 19 Aurangabad, 20 Dindori, 21 Nashik, 22 Palghar, 23 Bhiwandi, 24 Kalyan, 25 Thane, 26 Mumbai North, 27 Mumbai North-West, 28 Mumbai North-East, 29 Mumbai North-Central, 30 Mumbai South –Central, 31 Mumbai South, 32 Raigad.

Another form of expenditure which is coming to the fore in recent times is on Surrogate Advertisements, paid news etc
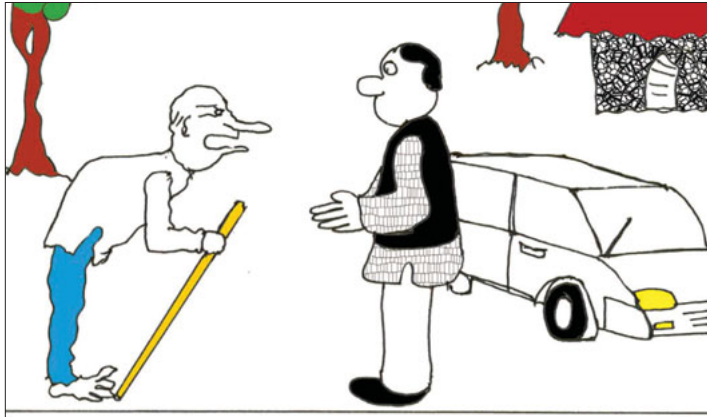
candidates / political party; (d) videograph with the help of Video Surveillance Team (VST), all major rallies, public meetings or other major expenses made by political parties after the announcement of election by the Commission.

Whenever a complaint regarding distribution of cash or liquor or any other item of bribe or regarding movement of antisocial elements or arms and ammunition, is received, the Flying Squad shall reach the spot immediately. The Flying Squad shall seize the items of bribe or other illicit items, and gather evidences and record statement of the witnesses and the persons from whom the items are seized. In case, a complaint is received about distribution of cash, gift items, liquor or free food; or about threat/ intimidation of electors; or of movement of arms/ammunitions/ antisocial elements and it is not possible for the Flying Squads to reach the spot immediately, then the information shall be passed on to the Static Surveillance Team, nearest to the spot or to the police station of that area, who shall rush a team to the spot for taking necessary action on the complaint.

TACKLING PAID NEWS SYNDROME

As stated earlier, one of the big menace during the elections is the phenomenon of paid news. It has serious ramifications as it is capable of eating into the vitals of free and fair media. Press Council of India and Election Commission are seized of the matter and are making serious efforts to tackle this problem. It has both corporate and political dimensions and there have been complaints against big business players of either paying journalists directly or managements of media organisations to get favourable coverage, often concealing facts. Similarly, poll candidates try to get image boosting write-ups by bribing journalists or publishing houses.

With regard to Paid News, following guidelines are followed:

- Six months before the due date of normal expiry of Lok Sabha or the State/ UT Legislative Assembly, as the case may be, a list of television channels/radio channels/newspapers, broadcast/ circulated in the State/UT and their standard rate cards shall be obtained by the CEOs and provided to all District level MCMCs for fixing the rates of advertisements.

- In case of bye-election to Parliamentary or Assembly constituency, the standard rate card shall be obtained by the District Election Officer concerned immediately on announcement of the bye-election.

- In case of any doubt relating to the application of |the standard rate card arising, the matter shall be referred to the DIPR or DAVP, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India for advice.

- The CEO and DEOs will brief Political Parties and Media Houses about the above guidelines before the commencement of the election campaign. Media shall be asked to exercise self-regulation in this regard. Wide publicity may be given to this order to make the general public also aware about these guidelines. The thrust of the briefing will be on the need for self-regulation.

One of the most critical problems in the matter of electoral reforms is the hard reality that for contesting an election one needs large amounts of money. The purpose of limiting expenditure prescribed are to ensure that the good and the honest people are able to contest elections and enter Legislature and Parliament. Limiting election expenditure thus limits corruption and makes the whole process transparent. ■

Delimitation of Constituencies

Delimitation Commission demarcates the boundaries of the Parliamentary Constituencies as per provisions of the Delimitation Act.

There are 543 Parliamentary constituencies in India each electing one member. Who demarcates the boundaries of these constituencies?

Delimitation Commission Under Article 82 of the Constitution, the Parliament by law enacts a Delimitation Act after every census. After coming into force commencement of the Act, the Central Government constitutes a Delimitation Commission. This Delimitation Commission demarcates the boundaries of the Parliamentary Constituencies as per provisions of the Delimitation Act. The present delimitation of constituencies has been done on the basis of 2001 census figures under the provisions of Delimitation Act, 2002. Notwithstanding the above, the Constitution of India was specifically amended in 2002 not to have delimitation of constituencies till the first census after 2026. Thus, the present Constituencies carved out on the basis of 2001 census shall continue to be in operation till the first census after 2026.

What is the main basis for allocation of seats to various States in the Lok Sabha?

Population of the State is the basis of allocation of seats of the Lok Sabha. As far as possible, every State gets representation in the Lok Sabha in proportion to its population as per census figures.

Is there any reservation of seats for any special category in Lok Sabha?

Yes. In Lok Sabha there is reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Here also census figures are taken into account.

On what basis is this reservation made?

Allocation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the Lok Sabha are made on the basis of proportion of Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the State concerned to that of the total population, vide provision contained in Article 330 of the Constitution of India read with Section 3 of the R. P. Act, 1950.

How many seats are reserved for Scheduled Castes in Lok Sabha?

For Scheduled Castes, 84 seats are reserved in Lok Sabha. The 1st schedule to Representation of People Act, 1950 as amended vide Representation of People (Amendment) Act, 2008 gives the State-wise breakup.

How many seats are reserved for Scheduled Tribes in Lok Sabha?

For Scheduled Tribes, 47 seats are reserved in Lok Sabha. The 1st schedule to R. P. Act, 1950 as amended vide Representation of People (Amendment) Act, 2008 gives the State-wise break up.
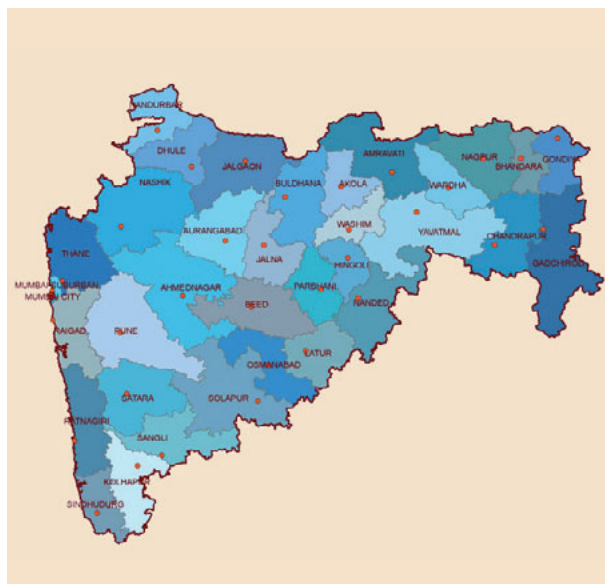
Which are the States having the minimum number of seats in Lok Sabha?

The following States and Union Territories have one seat each in the Lok Sabha Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli Daman and Diu Lakshadweep Pondicherry.

For every State, there has to be a Legislative Assembly, but it is not so in the case of all Union Territories. Which are the U.Ts. having a Legislative Assembly?

Out of the 7 Union Territories, only Delhi and Pondicherry have Legislative Assemblies. ■

Allocation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the Lok Sabha are made on the basis of proportion of Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the State concerned to that of the total population

LOK SABHA CONSTITUENCIES AT A GLANCE

The information about Lok Sabha Elections 2009 at a glance, including information of the party candidates with number of votes, total number of voters, Assembly constituencies included, 2014 Electoral Roll, total voters registered, male voters, female voters, service voters. For detailed information visit http://eci.nic.in and ceo.maharashtra.gov.in.

1) NANDURBAR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

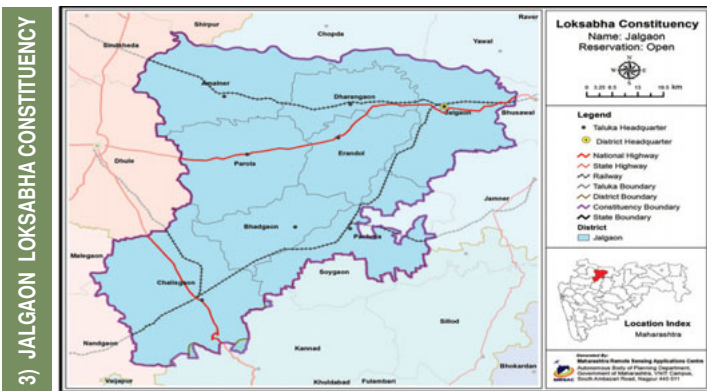Loksabha Constituency
Name: Nandurbar
Reservation: S. T.

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] GAVIT MANIKRAO HODLYA -275936 — INC
2] GAVIT SHARAD KRUSHNARAO- 235093 — SP
3] NATAWADKAR SUHAS JAYANT- 195987 — BJP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1455543
TOTAL VOTING - 766240

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
1 - Akkalkuwa (ST), 2 - Shahada (ST), 3 - Nandurbar (ST), 4 - Nawapur (ST), 5 - Sakri (ST), 9 - Shirpur (ST)
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total voters as per 2014 Electoral roll 1361370 Total male voters- 693732 Total Female Voters 667048 Service voters -590

2) DHULE LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Dhule
Reservation: Open

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] SONAWANE PRATAP NARAYANRAO - 263260 — BJP
2] PATEL AMRISHBHAI RASIKLAL - 243841 — INC
3] NIHAL AHMED MAULAVI MOH. USMAN - 72738 — JD(S)
TOTAL VOTERS - 1575225
TOTAL VOTING - 669906

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
6 Dhule Rural 7] Dhule Urban 8] Sindhkheda 114] Malegaon (Central) 115]- Malegaon (Outer) 116] - Baglan (ST)
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters - 1646176 Male Voters 862568 Female Voters - 781162 Service Voters - 2446

3) JALGAON LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Jalgaon
Reservation: Open

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] A. T. NANA PATIL-343647 — BJP
2] ADV. VASANTRAO JEEVANRAO MORE- 247627 — NCP
3] WAGH SUDHAKAR ATMARAM-19206 — IND
TOTAL VOTERS-1549391
TOTAL VOTING - 656334

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
13 Jalgaon City14 - Jalgaon Rural15 - Amalner 16 - Erandol17 - Chalisgaon18 - Pachora
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters-1664228 Male Voters 884331 Female Voters- 775637 Service voters -4260

4) RAVER LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Raver
Reservation: Open
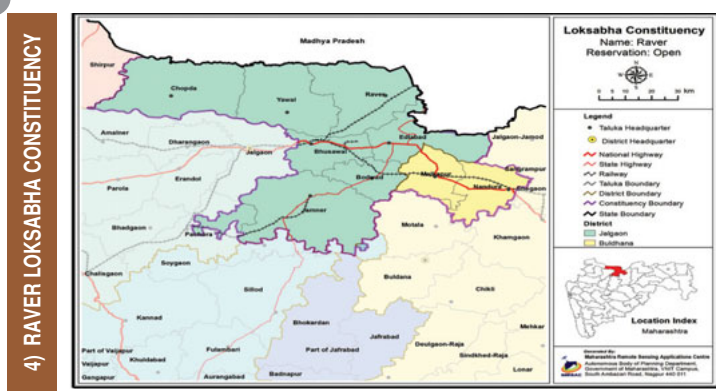
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] JAWALE HARIBHAU MADHAV - 328843 — BJP
2] ADV. PATIL RAVINDRA PRALHADRAO
3] PATIL SURESH CHINDHU - 33641
TOTAL VOTERS - 1418691
TOTAL VOTING - 719822

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
10 - Chopda (ST) 11 - Raver12 - Bhusawal (SC) 19 - Jamner 20 - Muktainagar 21 - Malkapur
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters-1563394 Male Voters-827307 Female Voters- 734450 Service voters -1637

5) BULDHANA LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Buldana
Reservation: Open
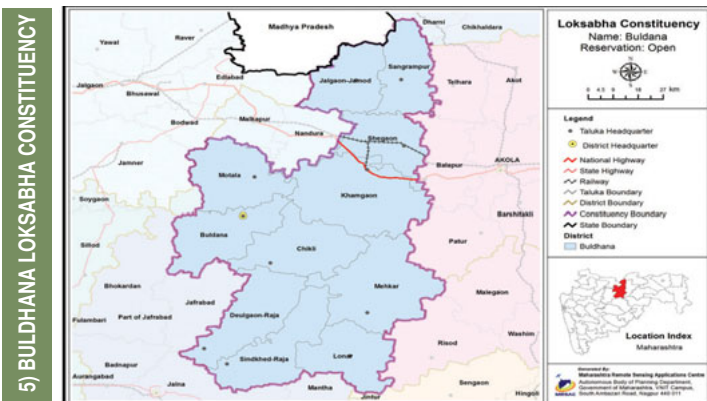
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] JADHAV PRATAPRAO GANPATRAO - 353671 — SS
2] SHINGANE DR.RAJENDRA BHASKARRAO - 325593 — NCP
3] DHOKNE RAVINDRA TULSHIRAMJI - 31034 — BBM
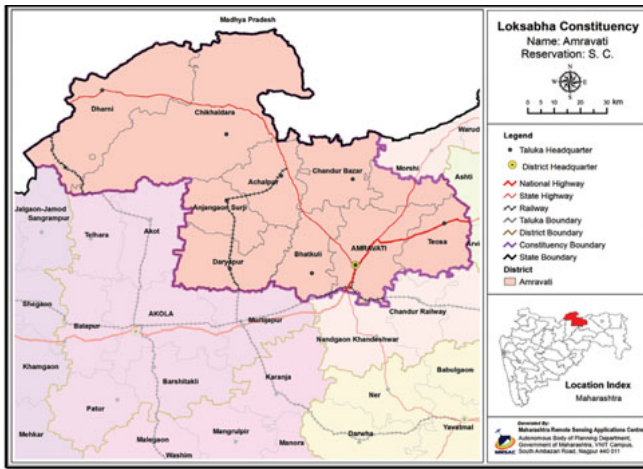**TOTAL VOTERS - 1382736**
TOTAL VOTING - 853133

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
22 - Buldhana23 - Chikhli24 - Sindhkhed 25 - Mehkar (SC Raja) 26 - Khamgaon27 - Jalgaon (Jamod)
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters for Loksabha 2014 - 1571655 Total Male voters- 831 141 Total Female Voters- 737453 Service Voters -3061

6) AKOLA LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Akola
Reservation: Open
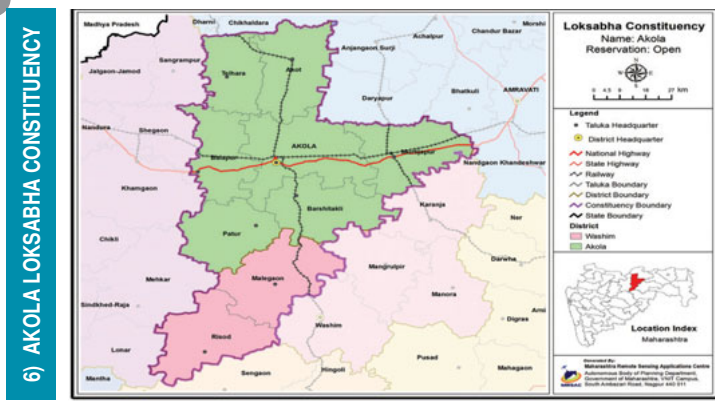
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO - 287526 — BJP
2] AMBEDKAR PRAKASH YASHWANT - 222678 — BBM
3] BABASAHEB DHABEKAR - 182776 — INC
TOTAL VOTERS - 1480606
TOTAL VOTING - 738955

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
28 - Akot 29 - Balapur 30 - Aakola West 31 - Akola East 32 - Murtizapur (Sc) 33 - Risod
2014 Electoral roll : Total Voters Registered For Loksabha Constituency 2014 -1642642 Male Voters- 866584 Female Voters -773720 service Voters-2338

## 7) AMRAVATI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Amravati
Reservation: S. C.

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] ADSUL ANANDRAO VITHOBA – 314286 – SS
2] GAWAI RAJENDRA RAMKRUSHNA – 252570 – RPI
3] DR. RAJIV GULABRAO JAMTHE – 64438 – IND
TOTAL VOTERS – 1423855
TOTAL VOTING – 732492

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
37 - Badnera 38 - Amrawati 39 - Teosa 40 - Daryapur (SC) 41 - Melghat (ST) 42 - Achalpur
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters - 1578052 Total Male Voters - 830431
Total Female Voters - 745668 Servic Voters - 1953

8) WARDHA LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Wardha
Reservation: Open
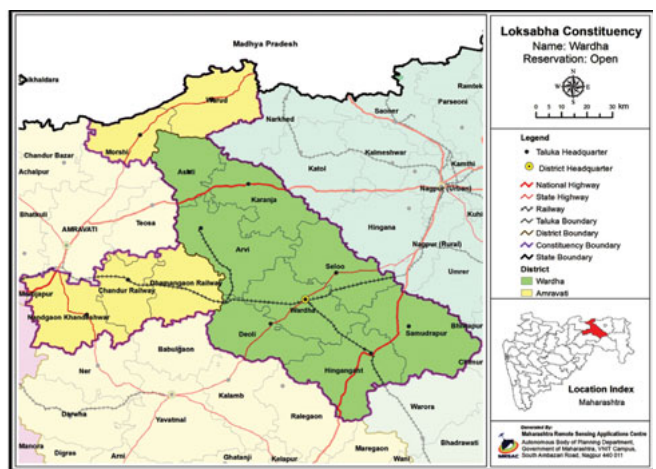
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] DATTA MEGHE – 352853 – INC
2] SURESH GANPATRAO WAGHMARE – 256935 – BJP
3] KANGALE BIPIN BABASAHEB – 131643 – BSP
TOTAL VOTERS – 1408781
TOTAL VOTING – 769132

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
36 - Dhamangaon Railway 43 - Morshi 44 - Arvi
45 - Deoli 46 - Hinganghat 47 - Wardha
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters -1542892
Total Male Voters - 806528
Total Female Voters - 734733
Service Voters - 1631

9) RAMTEK LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Ramtek
Reservation: S. C.
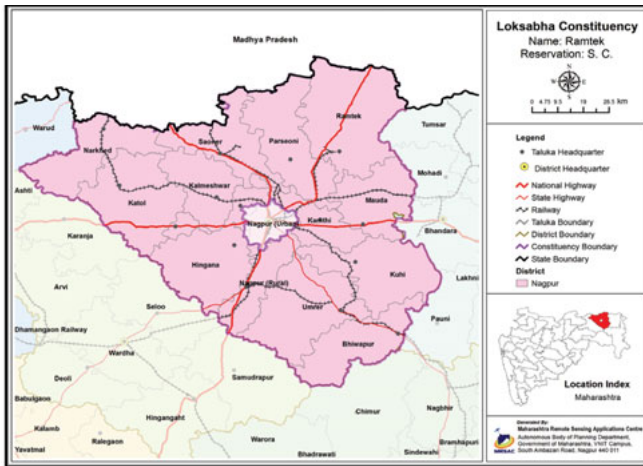
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] WASNIK MUKUL BALKRISHNA – 311614 – INC
2] TUMANE KRUPAL BALAJI – 294913 – SS
3] PRAKASHBHAU KISHAN TEMBHURNE – 62238 – BSP
TOTAL VOTERS –1502900
TOTAL VOTING –764712

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
48 - Katol 49 - Savner 50 - Hingna 51 - Umred (SC) 58 - Kamthi 59 - Ramtek
2014 Electoral roll : Total Voters - 1644662
Total Male Voters- 869613
Total Female Voters- 773584
Service Voters- 1465

10) NAGPUR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Nagpur
Reservation: Open
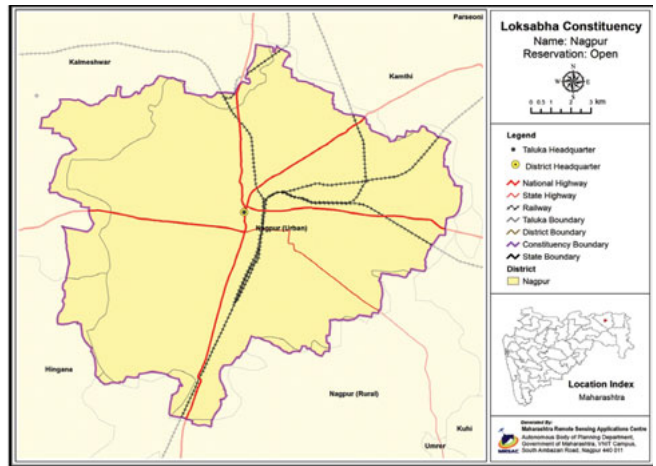
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] MUTTEMWAR VILASRAO BABURAOJI –315148 – INC
2] PUROHIT BANWARILAL BHAGWANDAS –290749 – BJP
3] ENGINEER MANIKRAO VAIDYA – 118741 – BSP
TOTAL VOTERS– 1738920
TOTAL VOTING –755369

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
52 - Nagpur South West 53 - Nagpur South, 54 - Nagpur East 55 - Nagpur Central 56 - Nagpur West 57 - Nagpur North (SC)
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters- 1842145 Total Male Voters -956396
Total Female Voters -894541 Service Voters- 1208

11) BHANDARA GONDIYA LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Bhandara-Gondia
Reservation: Open
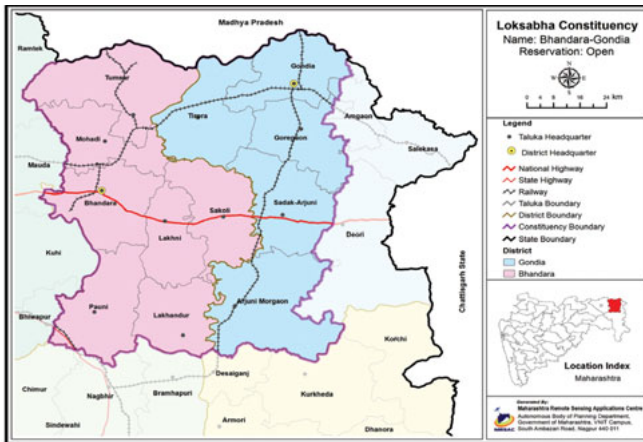
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] PATEL PRAFUL MANOHARBHAI - 489814 – NCP
2] NANABHAU FALGUNRAO PATOLE - 237899 – IND
3] PATLE SHISHUPAL NATTHUJI - 158938 – BJP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1450477
TOTAL VOTING - 1030750

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
60-Tumsar 61 - Bhandara (SC) 62-Sakoli
63-Arjuni Morgaon (SC) 64-Tirora 65-Gondia
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1633007
Total Male Voters-828812
Total Female Voters- 801326
Service Voters- 2868

12) GADCHIROLI- CHIMUR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] KOWASE MAROTRAO SAINUJI - 321756 – INC
2] ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE -293176 – BJP
3] ATRAM RAJE SATYAWANRAO -135756 – BSP

TOTAL VOTERS- 1285387
TOTAL VOTING- 837247

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
66 - Amgaon (ST) 67 - Armori (ST)
68 - Gadchiroli (ST) 69 - Aheri (ST) 73 - Bramhapuri 74 - Chimur
2014 Electoral roll : Total Voters -1451261 Total Male Voters -745033
Total Female Voters -705715
Total Service Voters- 513

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Gadchiroli-Chimur
Reservation: S. T.

13) CHANDRAPUR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Chandrapur
Reservation: Open

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] AHIR HANSARAJ GANGARAM - 301467 - BJP
2] PUGALIA NARESH - 268972 - INC
3] CHATAP WAMAN SADASHIVRAO - 169112 - STBP
TOTAL VOTERS- 1536352
TOTAL VOTING- 898515

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
70 - Rajura 71 - Chandrapur (SC) 72 - Ballarpur
75 - Warora 76 - Wani 80 - Arni (ST)
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters - 1715078 Total Male Voters - 902034
Total Female Voters - 812152
Service Voters - 892

14) YAVATMAL -WASHIM LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Yavatmal-Washim
Reservation: Open

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] BHAVANA GAWALI (PATIL) - 384443 - SS
2] HARISING RATHOD - 327492 - INC
3] YEDATKAR DILIP LAXMANRAO - 62781 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS -1554042
TOTAL VOTING -840064

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
34 - Washim (SC) 35 - Karanja 77 - Ralegaon (ST)
78 - Yavatmal 79 - Digras 81 - Pusad
2014 Electoral roll : Total Voters- 1715592
Total Male Voters - 902609
Total Female Voters - 812059
Total Service Voters - 924

15) HINGOLI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Hingoli
Reservation: Open
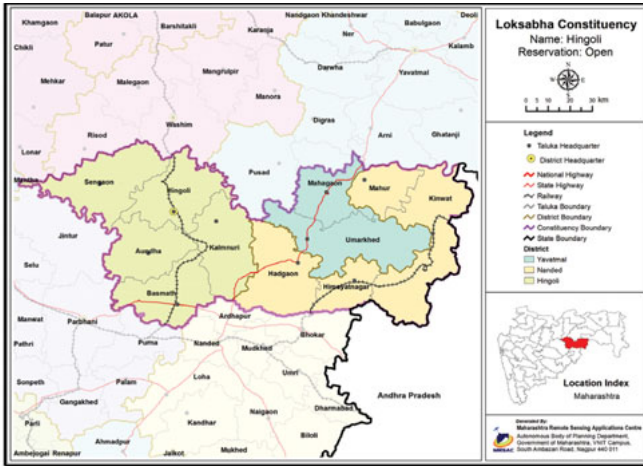
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] SUBHASH BAPURAO WANKHEDE - 340148 - SS
2]SURYAKANTA JAYANTRAO PATIL - 266514 - NCP
3] DR. B.D. CHAVAN - 111357 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS- 1369774
TOTAL VOTING- 817467

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
82 - Umarkhed (ST), 83 - Kinwat, 84 - Hadgaon,
92 - Basmath, 93 - Kalamnuri, 94 - Hingoli
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters -1565361
Total Male Voters - 829549
Total Female Voters -735117 Service Voters - 694

16) NANDED LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Nanded
Reservation: Open
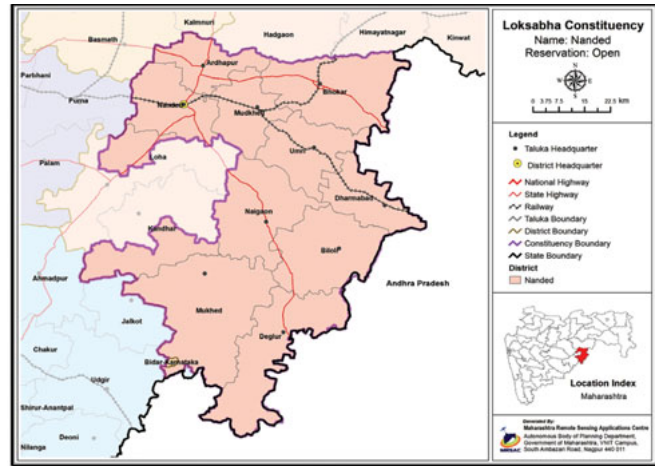
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] KHATGAONKAR PATIL BHASKARRAO BAPURAO
- 346400 - INC
2] PAWAR SAMBHAJI -271786 - BJP
2] MAQBUL SALIM HAJI M. KHWAJA - 84743 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS- 1439015
TOTAL VOTING- 774590

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
85 - Bhokar, 86 - Nanded North, 87 - Nanded
South, 89 - Naigaon, 90-Deglur (SC), 91 - Mukhed
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters- 1661884 Total
Male Voters- 866369 Total Female Voters - 794961
Service Voters- 554

17) PARBHANI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Parbhani
Reservation: Open
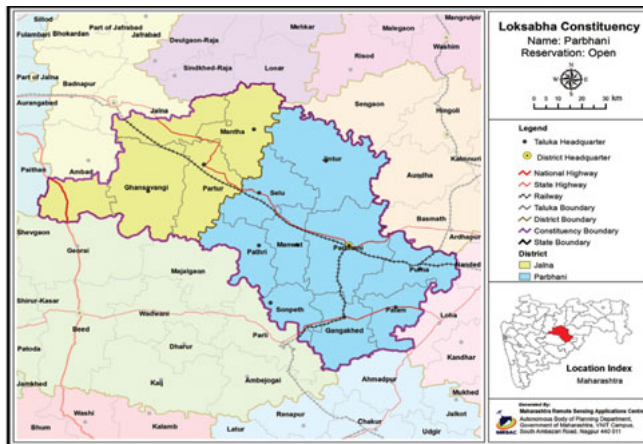
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] ADV. DUDHGAONKAR GANESHRAO NAGORAO
- 385387 - SS
2] WARPUDKAR SURESH AMBADASRAO - 319969 - NCP
3] RAJSHRI BABASAHEB JAMAGE - 64611 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1610088
TOTAL VOTING- 870726

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
95- Jintur, 96 - Parbhani, 97 - Gangakhed, 98 -
Pathri, 99 - Partur, 100 - Gansavangi
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1766632
Total Male Voters- 930804
Total Female Voters- 834987
Total Service Voters- 841

18) JALNA LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Jalna
Reservation: Open
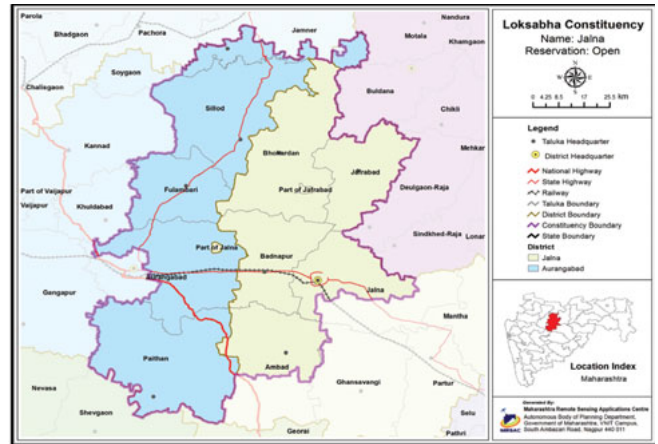
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO - 350710 - BJP
2] DR. KALE KALYAN VAIJINATHRAO - 342228 - INC
3] RATHOD RAJPALSINH GABRUSINH - 35976 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1426255
TOTAL VOTING- 797127

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
101 - Jalna, 102 - Badnapur (SC), 103-Bhokardan,
104 - Sillod ,106 - Pholambari, 110 - Paithan
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters- 1583338 Total Male Voters- 850051
Total Female Voters- 730882
Total Service Voters-2405

19) AURANGABAD LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
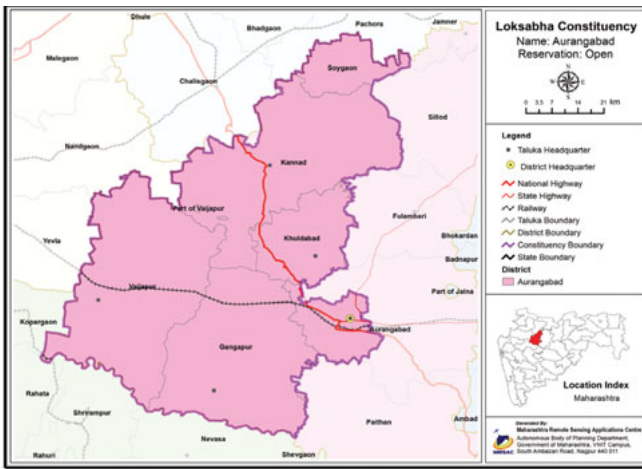
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE - 255896 — SS
2] UTTAMSINGH RAJDHARSINGH PAWAR - 222882 — INC
3] SHANTIGIRIJI MOUNIGIRIJI MAHARAJ-148026 — IND
TOTAL VOTERS -1417964
TOTAL VOTING -731147

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
105 - Kannad, 107 - Aurangabad (Central), 108 - Aurangabad (West) (SC), 109 - Aurangabad (East), 111 - Gangapur, 112 - Vaijapur
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters-1532612 Total Male Voters- 815394 Total Female Voters- 714913 Service Voters- 2305


20 DINDORI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
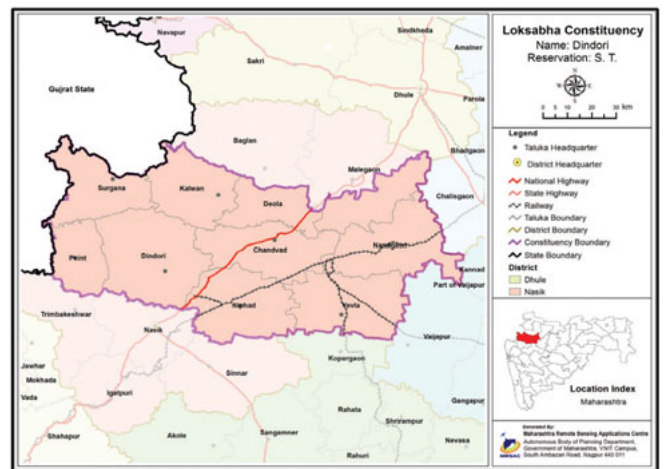
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] CHAVAN HARISHCHANDRA DEORAM-281254 — BJP
2] ZIRWAL NARHARI SITARAM-243907 — INC
3] GAVIT JIVA PANDU-105352 — CPM
TOTAL VOTERS - 1432938
TOTAL VOTING - 681623

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
113 - Nandgaon117 - Kalwan (ST) 118 - Chandwad 119 - Yevla121 - Niphad 122 - Dindori (ST)
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters- 1504111 Total Male Voters - 792095 Total Female Voters - 709940 Total Service voters - 2767


21) NASHIK LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
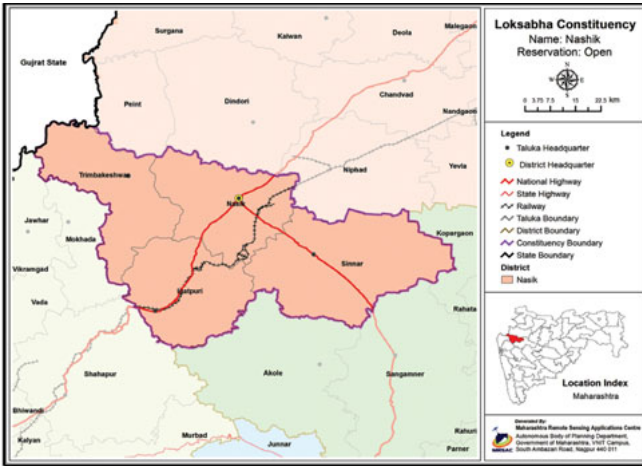
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] BHUJBAL SAMEER - 238706 — NCP
2] GODSE HEMANT TUKARAM - 216674 — MNS
3] GAIKWAD DATTA NAMDEO - 158251 — SS
TOTAL VOTERS - 1448414
TOTAL VOTING - 655671

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
120 - Sinnar 123 - Nashik East 124 - Nashik (Central) 125 - Nashik West 126 - Deolali (SC) 127 - Igatpuri (ST)
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters -1548163 Total Male Voters -824963 Total Female Voters -720601 Total Service Voters -2599

22) PALGHAR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
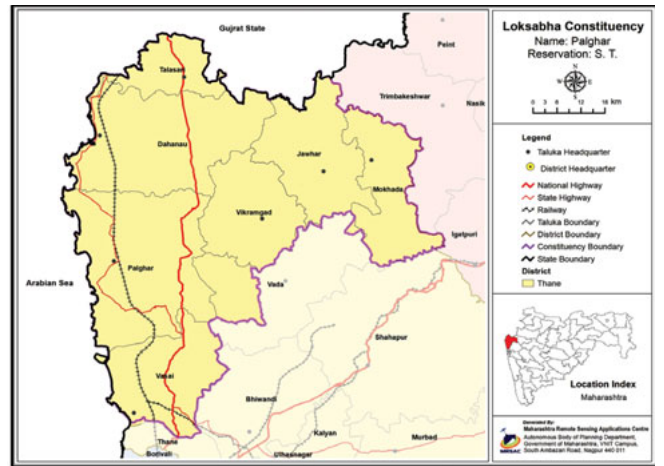
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] JADHAV BALIRAM SUKUR - 223234 — BVA
2] ADV. CHINTAMAN VANGA - 210874 — BJP
3] SHINGDA DAMODAR BARKU - 160570 — INC
TOTAL VOTERS- 1523061
TOTAL VOTING- 732587

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
128 - Dahanu (ST) 129 - Vekramgrth (ST) 130 - Palghar (ST) 131 - Boisar (ST) 132 - Nalasopara 133 - Vasai
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters-1548003 Total Male Voters - 814904 Total Female Voters -732904 Total Service Voters - 195

**23) BHIWANDI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY**

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] TAWARE SURESH KASHINATH -182789 — INC
2] PATIL JAGANNATH SHIVRAM -141425 — BJP
3] DEVRAJ KISAN MHATRE -107090 — MNS
TOTAL VOTERS- 1483176
TOTAL VOTING- 584263

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
134 - Bhiwandi Rural (ST) 135 - Shahapur (ST) 136 - Bhiwandi West 137 - Bhiwandi East 138 - Kalyan West 139 - Murbad
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1501700 Total Male Voters- 774338 Total Female Voters- 727078 Total Service Voters- 284

24) KALYAN LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
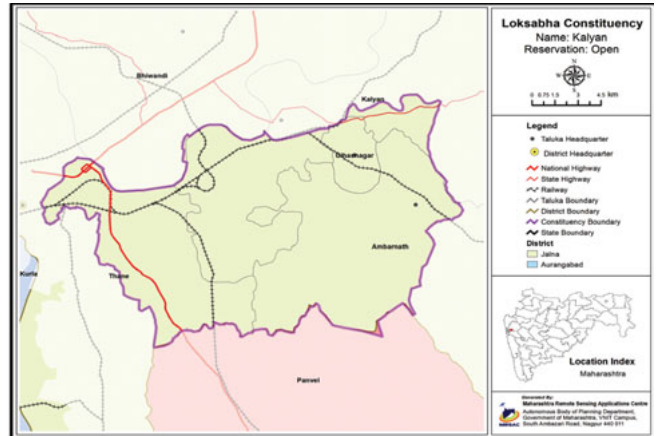
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] ANAND PRAKASH PARANJAPE - 212476 — SS
2] DAVKHARE VASANT SHANKARRAO - 188274 — NCP
3] VAISHALI DAREKAR-RANE - 102063 — MNS
TOTAL VOTERS- 1588507
TOTAL VOTING- 544828

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
140 - Ambarnath (SC) 141 - Ulhasnagar 142 - Kalyan East 143 - Dombivali 144 - Kalyan Rural 149 - Mumbra-Kalwa
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1880451 Total Male Voters -1022892 Total Female Voters -857171 Total Service Voters -381
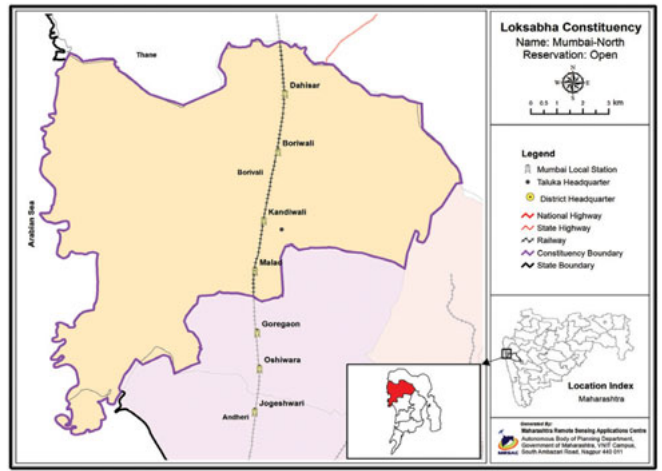
25) THANE LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
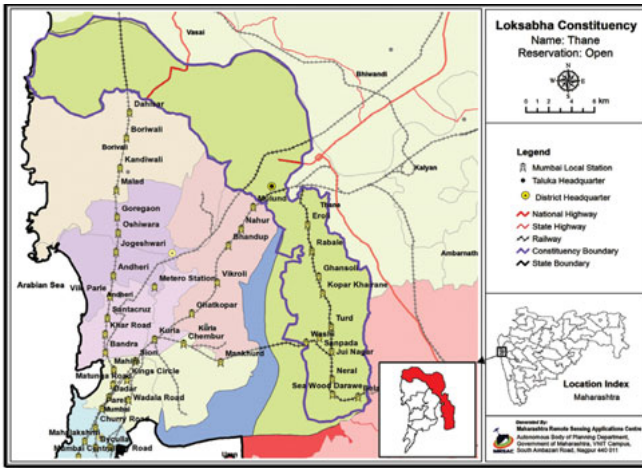
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] DR.SANJEEV GANESH NAIK - 301000 — NCP
2] CHAUGULE VIJAY LAXMAN - 251980 — SS
3] RAJAN RAJE - 134840 — MNS
TOTAL VOTERS-1806803
TOTAL VOTING - 749873

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
145 - Meera Bhayandar 146 - Ovala majiwada
147 - Kopri-Pachpakhadi 148 - Thane 150 - Airoli
151 - Belapur
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters - 1992242
Total Male Voters- 1099035
Total Female Voters- 892654
Total Service Voters- 553

26) MUMBAI NORTH LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] SANJAY BRIJKISHORLAL NIRUPAM - 255157 — INC
2] RAM NAIK - 249378 — BJP
3] PARKAR SHIRISH LAXMAN - 147502 — MNS
TOTAL VOTERS- 1608924
TOTAL VOTING- 685022

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
152 - Borivali 153 - Dhaisar 154 - Magathane 160
- Kandivali East 161 - Charkop 162 - Malad West
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1725385
Total Male Voters- 942287
Total Female Voters- 782885
Total Service Voters- 214

27) MUMBAI NORTH WEST LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
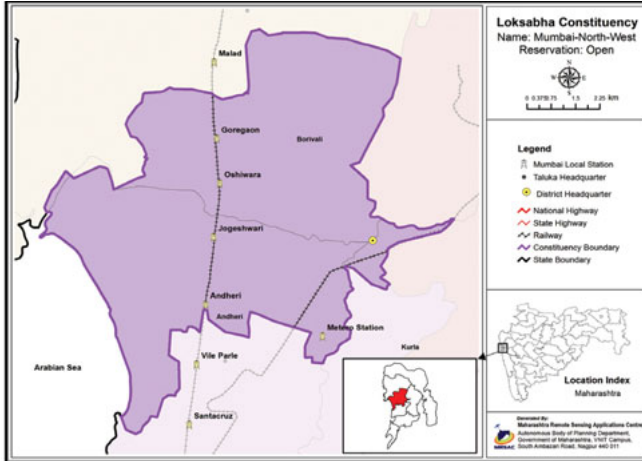
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] AD. KAMAT GURUDAS VASANT - 253920 — INC
2] GAJANAN KIRTIKAR - 215533 — SS
3] THAKARE SHALINI JITENDRA - 124000 — MNS
TOTAL VOTERS- 1604992
TOTAL VOTING-707134

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
158 - Jogeshwari East 159 - Dindoshi
163 - Goregaon 164 - Varsova 165 - Andheri West
166 - Andheri East
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- -1725318
Total Male Voters-961092 Total Female voters-
764025 Total Service Voters- 201

28) MUMBAI NORTH EAST LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
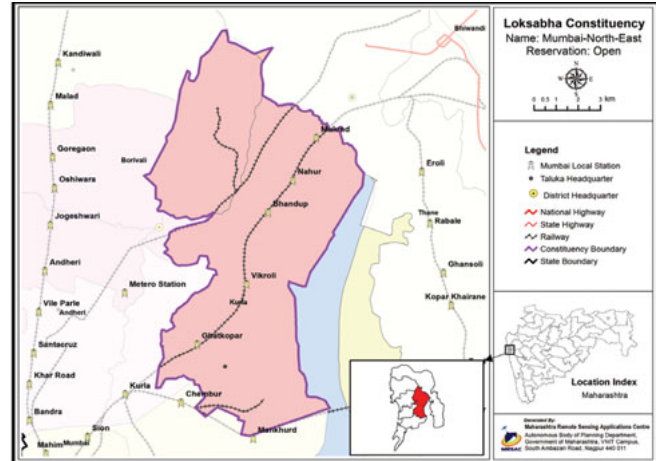
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] SANJAY DINA PATIL - 213505 — NCP
2] KIRIT SOMAIYA - 210572 — BJP
3] SHISHIR SHINDE - 195148 — MNS
TOTAL VOTERS- 1572890
TOTAL VOTING- 667904

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
155 - Mulund 156 - Vikhroli 157 - Bhanpup West
169 - Ghatkopar West 170 - Ghatkopar East
171 - Mankhurd shivajinagar
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters -1629526
Total Male Voters- 902865 Total Female Voters -
726194 Total Service Voters- 398

29) MUMBAI NORTH CENTRAL LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
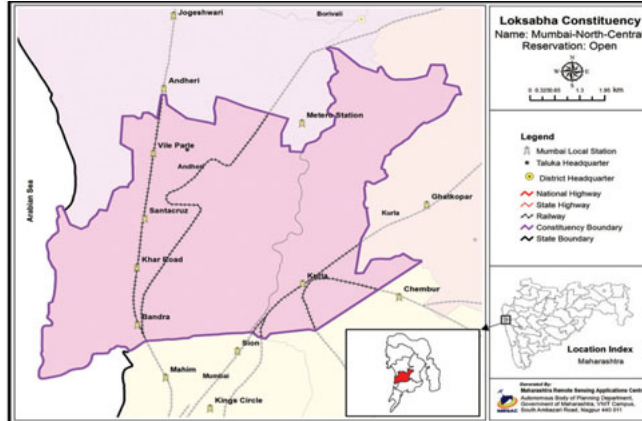
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] DUTT PRIYA SUNIL -319352 — INC
2] MAHESH RAM JETHMALANI - 144797 — BJP
3] SHILPA ATUL SARPOTDAR - 132546 — MNS
TOTAL VOTERS - 1681985
TOTAL VOTING - 664647

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
167 - Vile Parle 168 - Chandivali 174 - Kurla (SC)
175 - Kalina 176 - Vandre East 177 - Vandre West
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1696486
Total Male Voters- 945882
Total Female Voters- 750375
Total Service Voters- 225

30) MUMBAI SOUTH CENTRAL LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
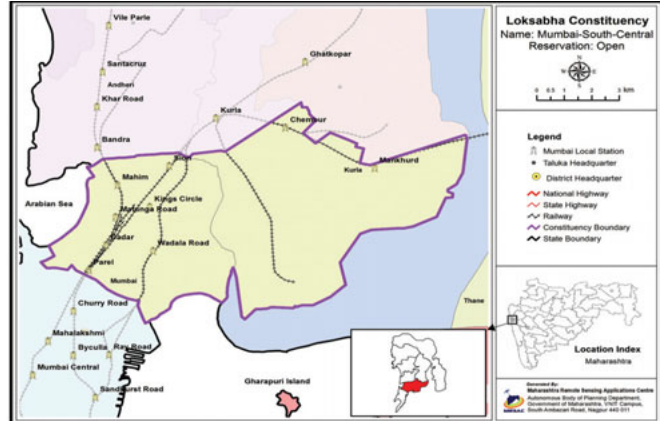
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] EKNATH M. GAIKWAD - 257523 — INC
2] SURESH ANANT GAMBHIR - 181817 — SS
3] SHWETA VIVEK PARULKAR - 108341 — MNS
TOTAL VOTERS- 1515899
TOTAL VOTING- 598845

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
172 - Anushakti Nagar 173 - Chembur 178 -
Dharavi (SC) 179 - Sion Koliwada 180 - Wadala
181 - Mahim
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters - 1408259
Total Male Voters- 773647 Total Female Voters -
634358 Total Service Voters 254

31) MUMBAI SOUTH LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Mumbai-South
Reservation: Open
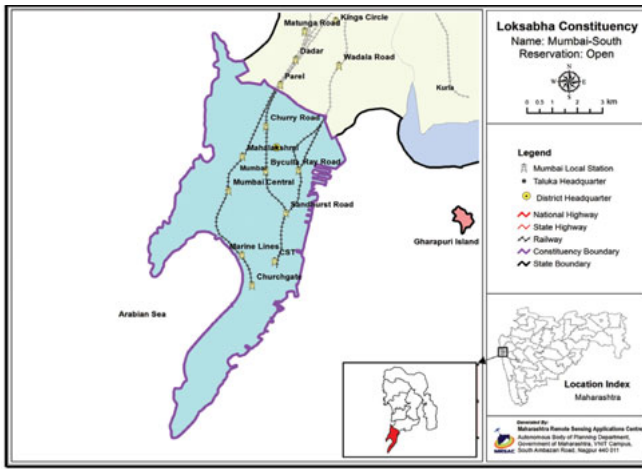
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] DEORA MILIND MURLI - 272411   - INC
2] BALA NANDGAONKAR - 159729   - MNS
3] MOHAN RAWLE - 146118   - SS
Total Voters- 1589811
Total Voting- 641571

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
182 - Worli 183 - Shivadi184 - Byculla 185 - Malabar Hill 186 - Mumbadevi 187 - Colaba
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1437700
Total Male Voters- 804031
Total Female Voters- 633170
Total Service Voters- 484

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32) RAIGAD LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Raigad
Reservation: Open

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] ANANT GEETE - 413546   - SS
2] BARRISTER A.R. ANTULAY - 267025   - INC
3] ADV. PRAVIN MADHUKAR THAKUR - 39159   - IND
Total Voters - 1359830
Total Voting - 767366

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
191 - Pen 192 - Alibag 193 - Shrivardhan 194 - Mahad 263 - Dapoli 264 - Guhagar
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters - 1516326
Total Male Voters - 743065
Total Female Voters - 770543
Total Service Voters - 1717

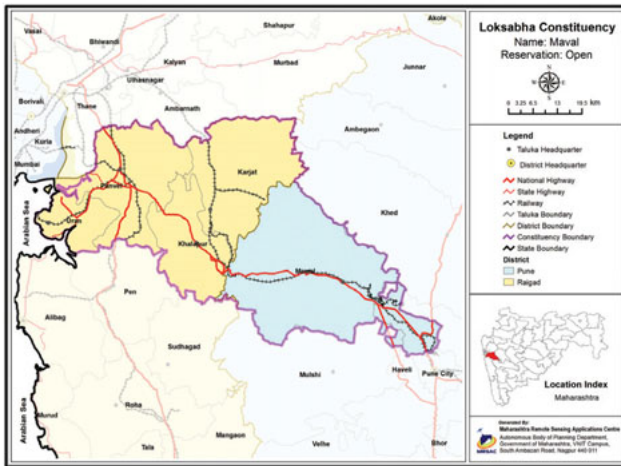## 33) MAVAL LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Maval
Reservation: Open

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] BABAR GAJANAN DHARMASHI - 364857   - SS
2] PANSARE AZIM FAKIRBHAI - 284238   - NCP
3] MISHRA UMAKANT RAMESHWAR - 20455   - BSP
Total Voters- 1604886
Total Voting- 717616

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
188 - Panvel 189 - Karjat 190 - Uran 204 - Maval 205 - Chinchwad 206 - Pimpri (SC)
2014 Electoral roll : Total Voters -1890678
Total Male Voting -1002017
Total Female Voting- 887312
Total Service Voters- 1349

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34) PUNE LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Pune
Reservation: Open
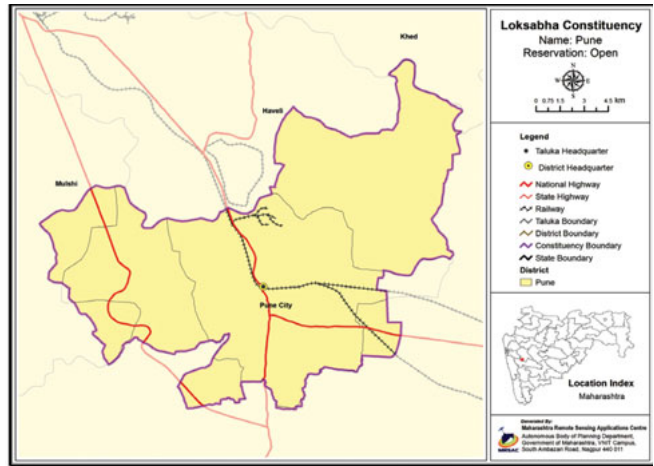
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] KALMADI SURESH - 279973   - INC
2] SHIROLE ANIL- 254272   - BJP
3] SHIROLE RANJIT SHRIKANT - 75930   - MNS
Total Voters - 1806953
Total Voting - 734641

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
208 - Vadgaon Sheri 209 - Shivajinagar 210 - Kothrud 212 - Parvati 214 - Pune Cantonment (SC) 215 - Kasba Peth
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1773287
Total Male Voters- 1017087 Total Female Voters- 854353, Total Service Voters- 1847

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35) BARAMATI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Baramati
Reservation: Open
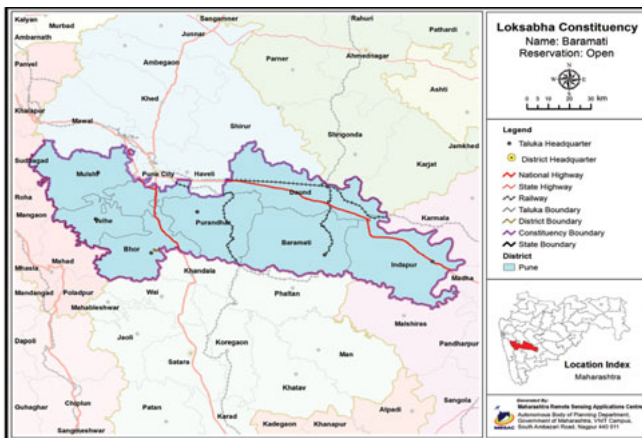
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] SULE SUPRIYA -487827   - NCP
2] NALAWADE KANTA -150996   - BJP
3] KUDALE VIVEK ANANT- 29864   - BSP
Total Voters- 1593460
Total Voting- 734048

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
199 - Daund 200 - Indapur 201 - Baramati 202 - Purandar 203 - Bhor 211 - Khadakwasala
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1761078
Total Male Voters-931809
Total Female Voters-826422
Total Service Voters- 2847

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36) SHIRUR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

Loksabha Constituency
Name: Shirur
Reservation: Open
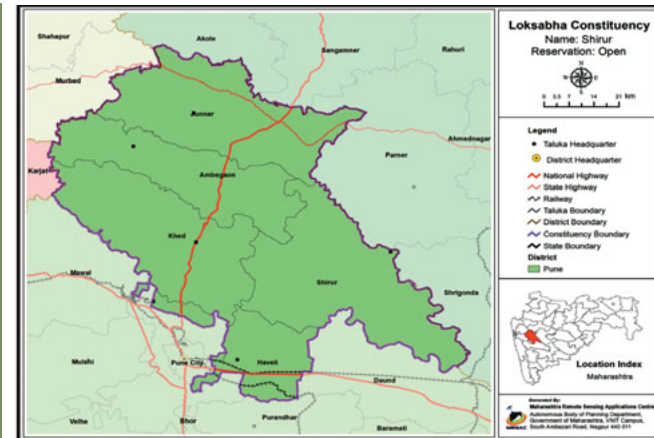
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] ADHALRAO - PATIL SHIVAJIRAO - 482563   - SS
2] LANDE VILAS VITHOBA - 303952   - NCP
3] ZAGDE YASHWANT SITARAM - 17439   - BSP
Total Voters- 1630466
Total Voting- 838728

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
195 - Junnar 196 - Ambegaon 197 - Khed Alandi 198 - Shirur 207 - Bhosari 213 - Hadapsar
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1765198
Total Male Voters- 940398
Total Female Voters- 821609
Total Service Voters- 3197

37) AHMEDNAGAR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
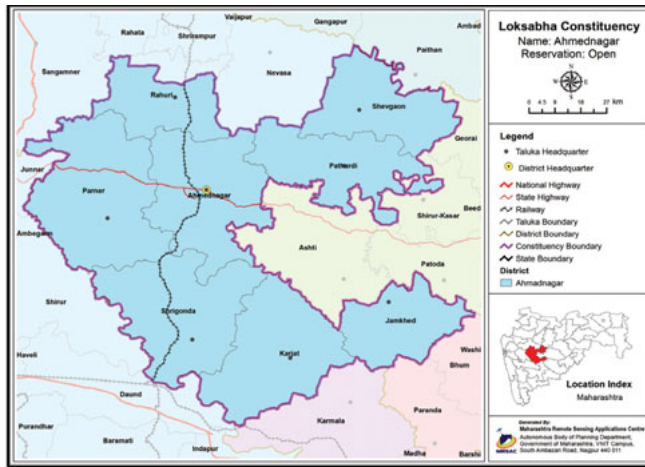
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] GANDHI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL - 312047 - BJP
2] KARDILE SHIVAJI BHANUDAS - 265316 - CPI
3] RAJALE RAJIV APPASAHEB - 152795 - IND
TOTAL VOTERS- 1517951
TOTAL VOTING- 786 980

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
222 - Shevgaon 223 - Rahuri 224 - Parner 225 - Ahmednagar City 226 - Shrigonda 227 - Karjat Jamkhed
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1680220 Total Male Voters- 885813 Total Female Voters -786458, Total Service Voters- 7949

38) SHIRDI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
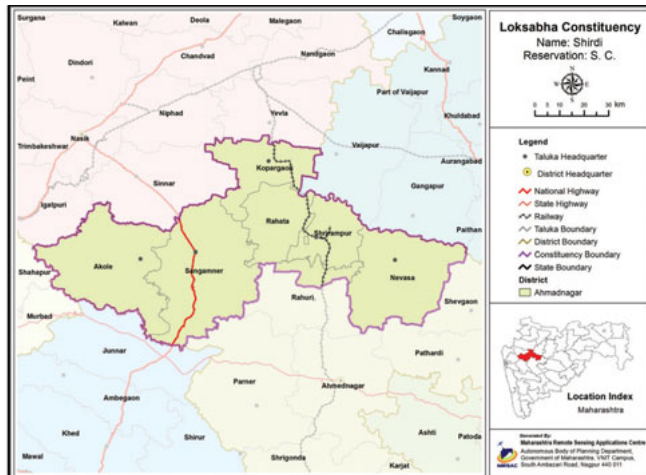
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] WAKCHAURE BHAUSAHEB RAJARAM - 359921 - SS
2] ATHAWALE RAMDAS BANDU - 227170 - RPI
3] RUPWATE PREMANAND DAMODHAR - 22787 -IND
TOTAL VOTERS- 1317890
TOTAL VOTING- 663881

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
216 - Akole (ST) 217 - Sangmner 218 - Shirdi 219 - Kopargaon 220 - Shrirampur (SC) 221 - Nevasa
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1449798
Total Male Voters- 761090
Total Female Voters- 686339
Total Service Voters- 2369

39) BEED LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] MUNDE GOPINATHRAO PANDURANG - 553994 - BJP
2] KOKATE RAMESH BABURAO (ADASKAR) - 413042 - NCP
3] MASKE MACHINDRA BABURAO - 25284 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1637239
TOTAL VOTING - 1073983

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
228 - Geora, 229 - Majalgaon, 230 - Beed, 231 - Ashti, 232 Kaij, 233 - Parli
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1774622
Total Male Voters- 951189
Total Female Voters- 818640
Total Service Voters- 4793

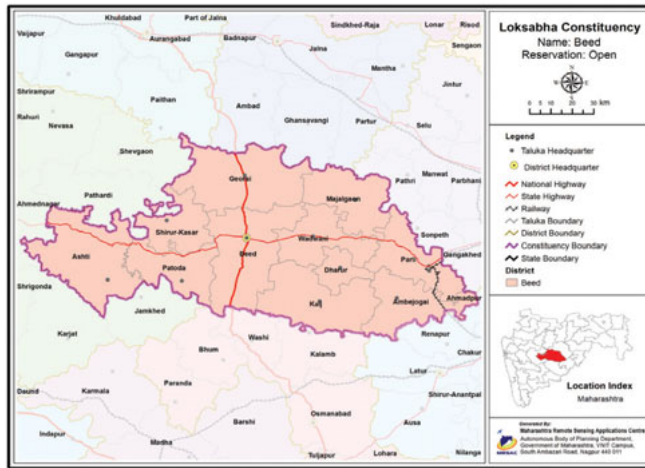
40) OSMANABAD LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] PATIL PADMASING BAJIRAO - 408853 - NCP
2] GAIKWAD RAVINDRA VISHWANATH - 402053 - SS
3] NAKADE DIWAKAR YASHWANT - 28045 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1608852
TOTAL VOTING - 924547

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
239 - Ausa 240 - Omerga (SC) 241 - Tuljapur 242 - Osmanabad 243 - Paranda 246 - Barshi
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters- 1713313, Total Male Voters- 917669
Total Female Voters- 789982, Service Voters - 5742

41) LATUR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
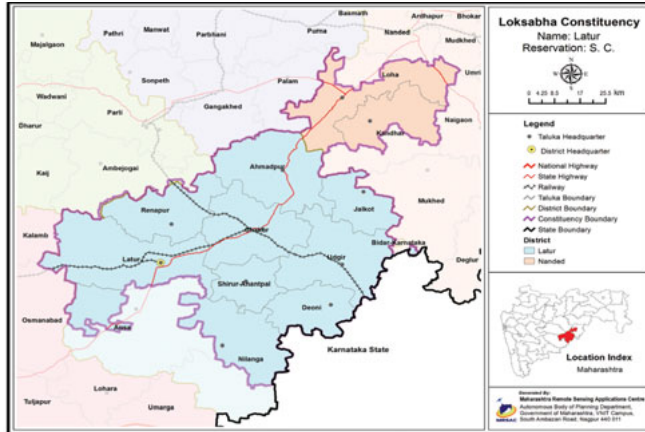
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] AWALE JAYWANT GANGARAM - 372890 - INC
2] GAIKWAD SUNIL BALIRAL - 364915 - BJP
3] ADV. BABASAHEB SADASHIVRAO GAIKWAD - 34033 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1509987
TOTAL VOTING - 829393

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
88 - Loha, 234 - Latur Rural, 235 - Latur City, 236 - Ahmedpur, 237 - Udgir (SC), 238 - Nilanga
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1666995
Total Male Voters -888988
Total Female Voters -774298
Total Service Voters- 3709

42) SOLAPUR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
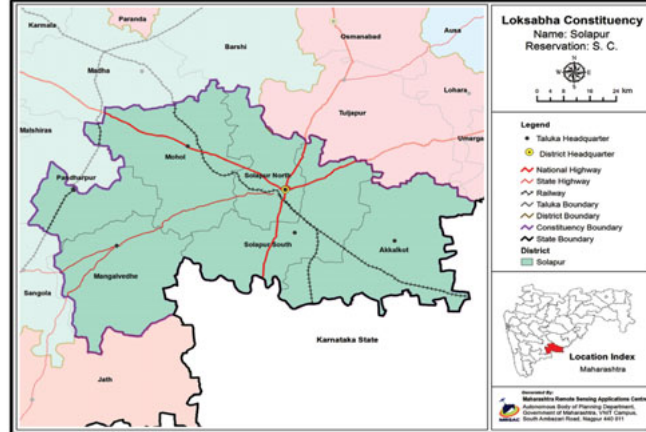
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] SHINDE SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO - 387591 - INC
2] ADV. BANSODE SHARAD MARUTI - 287959 - BJP
3] GAIKWAD PRAMOD RACHANDRA - 30457 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1594138
TOTAL VOTING - 743222

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
247 - Mohol (SC) 248 - Solapur City North 249 - Solapur City Central 250 - Akkalkot 251 - Solapur South 252 - Pandharpur
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1667133
Total Male Voters- 874435, Total Female Voters- 790438, Total Service Voters- 2260

43) MADHA LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
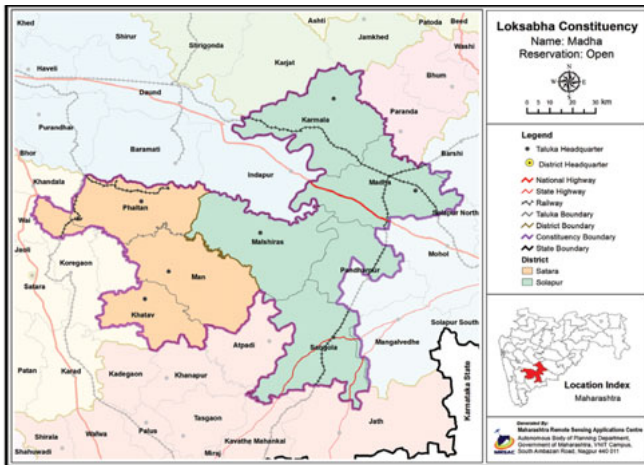
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] PAWAR SHARAD RAMCHANDRA - 530596 - NCP
2] DESHMUKH SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA - 216137 - BJP
3] JANKAR MAHADEV JAGANNATH - 98946 - RSPS
TOTAL VOTERS - 1558442
TOTAL VOTING - 919371

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
244 - Karmala, 245 - Madha, 253 - Sangola, 254 - Malshiras (SC), 255 - Phaltan (SC), 258 - Mann
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1698144
Total Male Voters- 895223
Total Female Voters- 797003
Total Service Voters- 5918

44) SANGALI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
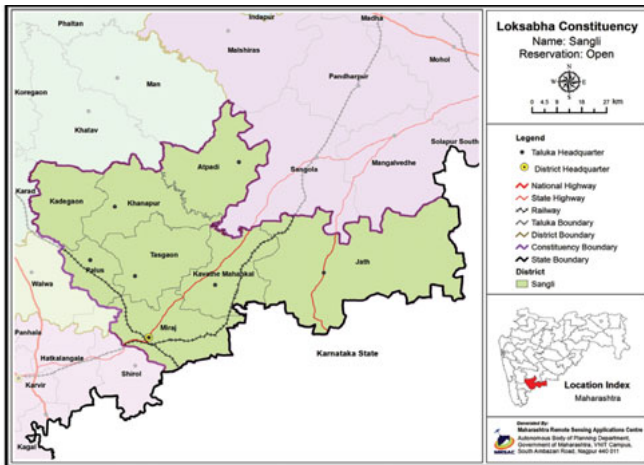
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] PATIL PRATIK PRAKASHBAPU - 378620 - INC
2] GHORPADE AJITRAO SHANKARRAO - 338837 - IND
3] PATEL M. JAVED M . YUSUF - 11793 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS - 1490571
TOTAL VOTING - 776830

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
281 - Miraj (SC) 282 - Sangli 285 - Palus-Kadegaon 286 - Khanpur 287 - Tasgaon-Kavathe Mahankal 288 - Jat
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1615793
Total Male Voters- 837476 Total Female Voters - 769366, Total Service Voters- 8911

45) SATARA LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
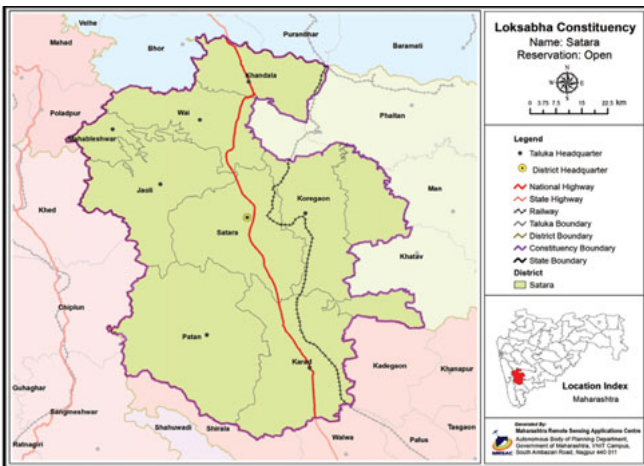
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] BHONSLE SHRIMANT CHH. UDYANRAJE - 532583 - NCP
2] PURUSHOTTAM BAJIRAO JADHAV - 235068 - SS
3] CHAVAN PRASHANT VASANT - 25112 - BSP
TOTAL VOTERS -1546146
TOTAL VOTING - 816646

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
256 - Wai 257 - Koregaon, 259 - Karad North, 260 - Karad South, 261 - Patan, 262 - Satara
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1701808
Total Male Voters- 867711
Total Female Voters- 825276
Total Service Voters- 8821

46) RATNAGIRI LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
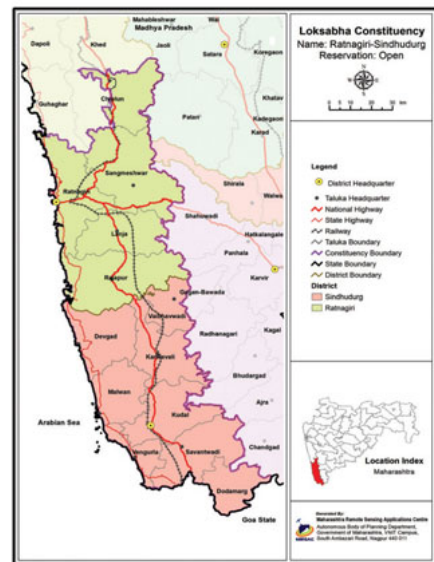
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] DR. NILESH NARAYAN RANE - 353915 - INC
2] SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU - 307165 - SS
3] SURENDRA BORKAR - 18858 - IND
TOTAL VOTERS- 1252225
TOTAL VOTING- 718721

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
265 - Chiplun, 266 - Ratnagiri, 267 - Rajapur, 268 - Kankavli, 269 - Kudal, 270 - Sawantwadi
Electoral Roll 2014 :
Total Voters -1350950
Total Male Voters- 655928
Total Female Voters- 691937
Total Service Voters- 3085

47) KOLHAPUR LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY

LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK -428082 - IND
2] SAMBHAJIRAJE SHAHU - 383282 -NCP
3] DEVANE VIJAY SHAMRAO - 172822 -SS
TOTAL VOTERS- 1583030
TOTAL VOTING -1027802

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
271 - Chandgad 272 - Radhanagari 273 - kagal 274 - Kolhapur South 275 - Karvir 276 - Kolhapur North
2014 Electoral roll : Total Voters- 1731830, Total Male Voters- 889939
Total Female Voters- 832924
Total Service Voters- 8967

48) HATKANGALE LOKSABHA CONSTITUENCY
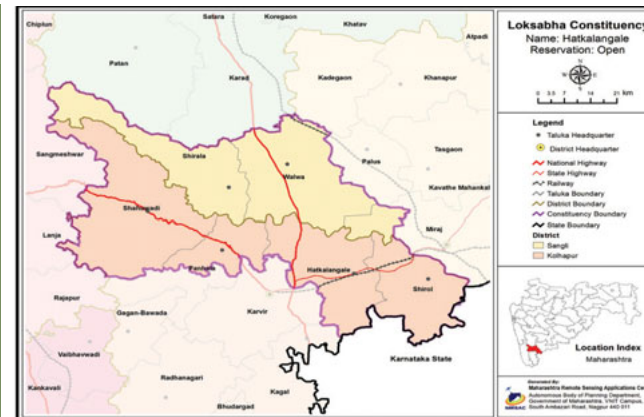
LOKSABHA ELECTION RESULT 2009
1] SHETTI RAJU ALIAS DEVAPPA ANNA - 481025 - SWP
2] MANE NIVEDITA SAMBHAJIRAO - 385965 - NCP
3] RAGUNATH RAMCHANDRA PATIL - 55050 - SS
TOTAL VOTERS-1458560
TOTAL VOTING- 978202

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDED
277 - Shahuwadi 278 - Hatkanangle (SC) 279 - Ichalkaranji 280 - Shirol 283 - Islampur 284 - Shirala
Electoral Roll 2014 : Total Voters- 1614336
Total Male Voters- 839440 Total Female Voters- 770449 Total Service Voters- 4413

Involving Youth in The Electoral Process

Indian youth is now garnered with higher education on a large scale and the role of this empowered young generation in the electoral process is becoming eminently important. Hence when the younger generation will appreciate total electoral process, they will initiate others as well to vote, says **Milind Saraf**, Section Officer, SVEEP, Mantralaya.

E lections are an indelible part and the voter list is the foundation of elections in our country which is the largest Democracy in the World. Processes such as updating and compilation of accurate voter lists, registration of 100 per cent eligible voters in the voter lists, deletion of deceased, repetitive and migrated voters etc are carried out every year at the Electoral Registration Officer level. Analyzing the voter lists it is found that the number of young voters is quite less.

Indian youth is now garnered with higher education on a large scale and the role of this empowered young generation in the electoral process is becoming eminently important. Hence when the younger generation will appreciate total electoral process, they will initiate others as well to vote. Electoral training, action plan and discussion forums can be quite effective on this generation. It was essential for providing an appropriate direction and a helping hand to students and young entrepreneurs so that they can step ahead in the direction of responsible citizenship. Due to this factor

> **The Election Commission of India felt, it is essential that all eligible young voters should be registered in the voter lists**

the Election Commission of India has felt that it is essential that all such eligible young voters are registered in the voter lists. The fundamentals of Indian democracy would definitely be imbibed on the young voters. Realizing this need, the Election Commission of India has undertaken an ambitious programme titled Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP). Under this programme an awareness campaign is being undertaken for involving voter registration especially among young and women voters.

Maharashtra has a total population of 11,76,69,050 including a population of 8,02,98,402 of persons with age 18 plus with population

of youth within age limit of 18-19 being 38,94,589. It was necessary to register eligible young voters under this programme. It was also necessary to organize get-to-gather, conferences and camps with this in view.

It was essential to prepare a path-breaking plan and to get the youth on board to participate in the same to achieve this objective. At the same time it was necessary to invoke participation of educational institutes, colleges as well as the teachers in order that the information was conveyed effectively to the youth. With this in view various types of activities were implemented at many places in the State of Maharashtra.

PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME

It is difficult to individually visit various educational institutes and colleges for voter registration. However it has been possible to implement this programme through the medium of already active National Service Scheme (NSS) at concerned colleges. For this work, more than 500 National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers helped the District Election Office. With the participation of other Non Governmental Organizations it was possible to implement the voter registration campaign on a large scale. Through this medium a large number of trainers have come out and are training other volunteers under their jurisdiction.

Modern technology was used for creation of expansive awareness about the movement. With this in view and to make the voter registration process easier Voting help centres were created and Block Level Officers (BLO) were appointed. The information about these officers along with mobile numbers has been published on the District Website. A large number of people were benefitted due to this.

On the immersion day of the Ganesh Festival in Pune, a Voter Awareness Rally was organized with co-operation of NGOs and literature to the people attending festivities was distributed.

Volunteers from National Cadet Core (NCC) presented street plays at various places. Much debated interviews on Akashwani as well as popular FM Radio Mirchy were carried along. The campaign

You lose if you snooze!
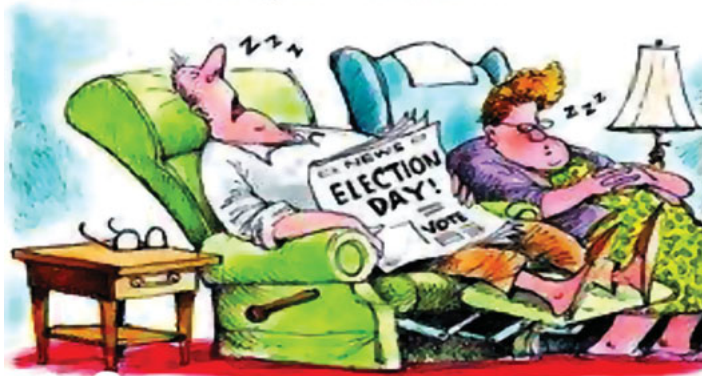
information was carried from home to home through the help of Cable Networks. Various slogans and cartoons regarding the campaign were shown in cinema theatres.

Due to meaningful utilization of a variety of initiatives taken, SVEEP project, received an overwhelming response from the new and young voters all around. The programmes were implemented effectively all over the State.

While implementing this campaign, it was a very positive and assertive experience working with the volunteers of Non Governmental Organizations, National Service Scheme (NSS) and Senior Citizens organizations. Due to positive, co-operative and assertive point of view held by all these organizations and with their total co-operation with the administration, the Voter Registration Campaign concluded with huge success. ∎

Maharashtra has a population of 8,02,98,402 of persons with age 18 plus with population of youth within age limit of 18-19 being 38,94,589

Significance of Ethical Voting

How people vote makes a difference not only to the society but to the whole country. Bad choices at the polls can destroy economic opportunities and produce crises. Hence efforts are being made continuously to educate the voters on the significance of Ethical Voting through educational institutions, says **Chandran Iyer**.

Gender gap in registration and voter turnout, urban apathy to electoral participation and youth disconnect with the electoral process have emerged as the biggest challenges

Indian national elections have been the largest electoral exercise in the world ever since the first national elections in 1952. Moreover the cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity of the Indian society, as well as the federal nature of the Indian State, make this event a particularly complex one.

It is the process of election that mirrors the hopes and aspirations of the people. But the lack of ethics have put the Indian political system under strain and led to the general declines of values in public life. Such a system does not augur well for the democracy and it needs to be rectified. There are many issues that need to be tackled.

Gender gap in registration and voter turnout, urban apathy to electoral participation and youth disconnect with the electoral process have emerged as the biggest challenges, said Dr. Nasim Zaidi, Election Commissioner of India, when he launched the website http://indiavoting.org/ to bring voter registration at the doorstep of Corporate India on January 31 in New Delhi.

To combat these issues, he suggested that creating awareness, motivating people to participate in the electoral process and facilitating and easing out the process for registration were some of the ways to increase voter turnout. His view sums up the burgeoning problem in India where elections are often mired in controversies on ethical issues.

Inducement of the electorate through payments in the form of cash, goods, or services is very common during the elections. Here slums are critical to a campaign because their population density and poverty allows them to be more 'easily mobilized' by bribes. During the election period meat, chicken and beverages are distributed to people to woo them for votes. Poor voters expect bribes from political candidates, and candidates find various ways to satisfy voter expectations.

This happens despite the fact that there are laws to tackle such propensity of the political parties. Any attempt to woo the voters by offering bribe in any manner warrants the penal Provision as enshrined in the Section -17(b) of Election Code of Conduct. This provision may put both the giver and taker of bribe inside the bar for a period of one year.

What is needed is to create awareness among the people so that they are not influenced by material gifts, money, alcohol etc., from the candidates. In this regard the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation Plan

(SVEEP) is playing a big role to ensure greater participation for a stronger Democracy by ensuring that no section of the society is left out in exercising their franchise.

How people vote makes a difference not only to the society but to the whole country. Bad choices at the polls can destroy economic opportunities and produce crises that lower everyone's standards of living and create social, political and economic crises.

Hence efforts are being made continuously to educate the voters on the significance of Ethical Voting through educational institutions, Central and State Governments, Government and Semi Government offices, voluntary institutions, State level newspapers, social media and others.

Jason Brennan who is Assistant Professor at the McDonough School of Business at Georgetown University and is the author of The Ethics of Voting says "Voting is not like choosing what to eat off a restaurant's menu. If a person makes bad choices at a restaurant, at least only he bears the consequences of his actions. Yet when voters make bad choices at the polls, everyone suffers. Irresponsible voting can harm innocent people".

He said "how other people vote is my business. After all, they make it my business. Electoral decisions are imposed upon all through force, that is, through violence and threats of violence. When it comes to politics, we are not free to walk away from bad decisions. Voters impose

externalities upon others".

To increase the participation of the students and create awareness among them National Voter's Day is celebrated. Programmes are conducted in the colleges to spread the importance of ethical voting so that they exercise their electoral franchise with full consciousness.

Cultural festivals are also being used in a big way to create awareness among the people on the issue of Ethical Voting. In the ancient time Lokmanya Tilak had started "Ganesh festival for social awareness and today it has taken big form and the same is being used to disseminate awareness about registration in the electoral rolls and ethical voting. Similarly the Navratri Festival in which millions of people take part is also used for spreading this awareness. Many saints and spiritual leaders are also giving discourses to the people on the aspects of Ethical Voting. Many NGOs and voluntary organizations are also involved in educating the people on this aspect. Besides in the rural areas "Kirtan Media" is being used to inform the people

about the significance of "Mat daan"(voting) on the lines of Rakt daan (blood donation). "National Voters' Day" is being celebrated at district level, tehsil level in every Government office, at polling booth and also at college level.

Observing the extent of Form No. 6 the campaign is seen to be succeeded. Good voter-turnout is expected in the forthcoming Parliament and Assembly elections because of the success of these initiatives. As of now the voter turnout of the women is less. However in days to come we can hope their greater participation in ethical voting. It will not only help in empowering women but also help in containing the nefarious practices of female feoticides. ■

To increase the participation of the students and create awareness among them National Voters' Day is celebrated

Everything About Voting Machine

Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) are being used in India in General and State elections. The EVMs reduce the time in both casting a vote and declaring the results compared to the old paper ballot system.

When was the Electronic Voting Machine first introduced in elections?

Electronic Voting Machines manufactured in 1989-90 were used on experimental basis for the first time in 16 Assembly Constituencies in the States of Madhya Pradesh (5), Rajasthan (5) and NCT of Delhi (6) at the General Elections to the respective Legislative Assemblies held in November, 1998.

How can EVMs be used in areas where there is no electricity?

EVMs run on an ordinary 6 volt alkaline battery manufactured by Bharat Electronics Ltd., Bangalore and Electronic Corporation of India Ltd., Hyderabad. Therefore, even in areas with no power connections, EVMs can be used.

What is the maximum number of votes which can be cast in EVMs?

EVMs can record a maximum of 3840 votes. As normally the total number of electors in a polling station will not exceed 1500, the capacity of EVMs is

more than sufficient.

What is the maximum number of candidates which EVMs can cater to?

EVMs can cater to a maximum of 64 candidates. There is provision for 16 candidates in a Balloting Unit. If the total number of candidates exceeds 16, a second Balloting Unit can be linked parallel to the first Balloting Unit. Similarly, if the total number of candidates exceeds 32, a third Balloting Unit can be attached and if the total number of candidates exceeds 48, a fourth Balloting Unit can be attached to cater to a maximum of 64 candidates.

In case the number of contesting candidates goes beyond 64 in any constituency, EVMs cannot be used in such a constituency. The conventional method of voting by means of ballot box and ballot paper will have to be adopted in such a constituency.

In our country a sizeable section of the population being illiterate will it not cause problems for the illiterate voters?

In fact, voting by EVMs is simpler compared to the conventional system, where one has to put the voting mark on or near the symbol of the candidate of his choice, fold it first vertically and then horizontally and thereafter put it into the ballot box. In EVMs, the voter has to simply press the blue button against the candidate and symbol of his choice and the vote is recorded. Rural and illiterate people had no difficulty in recording their votes and, in fact they have welcomed the use of EVMs.
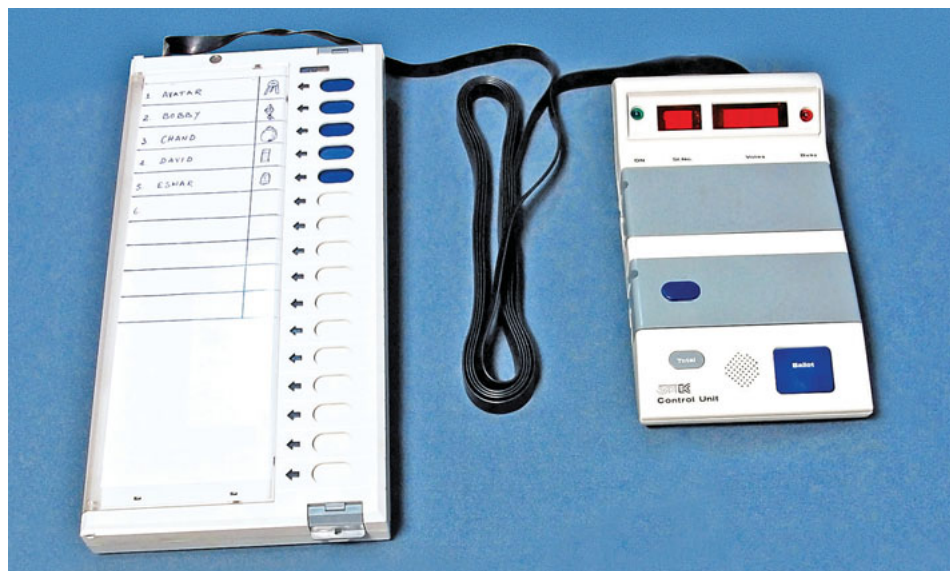
Is it possible to use EVMs for simultaneous elections for Parliament and State Legislative Assembly?

Yes. It is possible to use EVMs for simultaneous elections for Parliament and State Legislative Assembly and the existing EVMs have been designed keeping this requirement in view.

With ballot boxes counting is done after mixing the ballot papers. Is it possible to adopt this system when EVMs are used?

The normal rule is to count the votes polling station-wise and this is what is being done when EVM is used in each polling station. The mixing system of counting is done only in those constituencies specially notified by the Election Commission. Even in such cases, the result from each EVM can be fed into a Master Counting Machine in which case, only the total result of an Assembly Constituency will be known and not the result in each individual polling station.

Can booth - capturing be prevented by the use of EVMs?

By booth-capturing, if one means, taking away or damaging of ballot boxes or ballot papers, this evil cannot be prevented by the use of EVMs as EVMs can also be forcibly taken away or damaged by miscreants. But if one looks at booth capturing as a case of miscreants intimidating the polling personnel and stamping the ballot papers on the symbol and escaping in a matter of minutes, this can be prevented by the use of EVMs. The EVMs are programmed in such a way that the machines will record only five votes in a minute. As recording of votes has necessarily to be through Control Unit and Balloting Unit, whatever be the number of miscreants they can record vote only at the rate of 5 per minute. In the case of ballot papers, the miscreants can distribute all the 1000 odd ballot papers assigned to a polling station, among

Electronic Voting Machines will record only five votes in a minute

themselves, stamp them, stuff them into the ballot boxes and run away before the police reinforcements reach. In half-an-hour, the miscreants can record only a maximum of 150 votes by which time, chances are the police reinforcement would have arrived. Further, the presiding Officer or one of the Polling Officers can always press the "close" button as soon as they see some intruders inside the polling station. It

In EVMs, voter has to simply press the blue button against the candidate and symbol of his choice and the vote is recorded

will not be possible to record any vote when once the 'close' button is pressed and this will frustrate the efforts of the booth-capturers.

How long the Control Unit stores the result in its memory?

The Control Unit can store the result in its memory for 10 years and even more.

Is it possible to programme the EVMs in such a way that initially, say upto 100 votes, votes will be recorded exactly in the same way as the 'blue buttons' are pressed, but thereafter, votes will be recorded only in favour of one particular

candidate irrespective of whether the `blue button' against that candidate or any other candidate is pressed?

The microchip used in EVMs is sealed at the time of import. It cannot be opened and any rewriting of programme can not be done by anyone without damaging the chip. Therefore, there is absolutely no chance of programming the EVMs in a particular way to select

any particular candidate or political party.

Ballot boxes are engraved so as to avoid any scope for complaint of replacement of these boxes. Is there any system of numbering EVMs?

Yes. Each Control Unit has a unique ID Number, which is painted on each unit with a permanent marker. This ID Number will be allowed to be noted by the Polling Agents and will also be recorded in a Register maintained for the purpose by the Returning Officer. The address tag attached to the Control Unit also will indicate this ID Number. Therefore, there is no question of replacement of

any EVM.

Is there any provision for issue of tendered ballot papers when EVMs are used?

Yes. There is provision for issue of tendered ballot papers under the system of EVMs also. But, when such a situation arises, the voter concerned will be issued an ordinary ballot paper. After marking the ballot paper with the arrow cross mark rubber stamp supplied, the tendered ballot paper will be put inside a cover specially provided for the purpose, sealed and kept by the Presiding Officer.
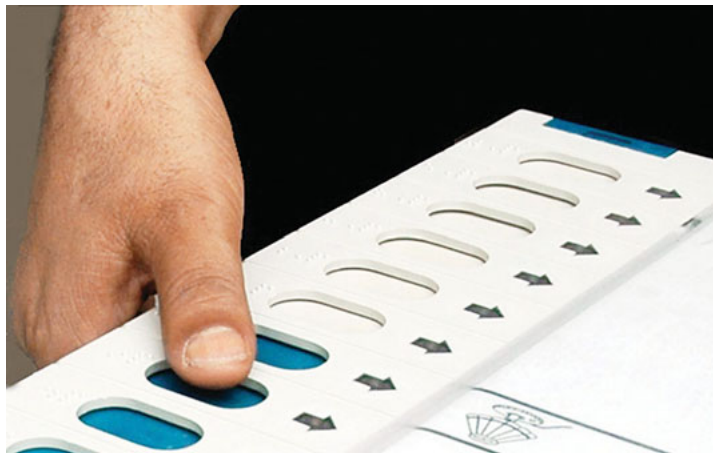
How can one rule out the possibility of recording further votes at any time after close of the poll and before the commencement of counting by interested parties?

As soon as the last voter has voted, the Polling Officer in-charge of the Control Unit will press the 'Close' Button. Thereafter, the EVM will not accept any vote. Further, after the close of poll, the Balloting Unit is disconnected from the Control Unit and kept separately. Votes can be recorded only through the Balloting Unit. Again the Presiding officer, at the close of the poll, will hand over to each polling agent present an account of votes recorded. At the time of counting of votes, the total will be tallied with this account and if there is any discrepancy, this will be pointed out by the Counting Agents. ∎

(Source: Website of Election Commission of India)

Outlining the Proper Election Practices

The Election Commission has its rules and regulations called 'Model Code of Conduct' for every stakeholder involved in the election process from political parties, ruling governments, campaigns and candidates to ensure elections are conducted in a transparent manner says , **Shruti Ganapataye.**

India known for its largest democracy in the world, would soon be having 16th general elections since 1951. As the country has adopted federal structure, the direct election of candidates upto the Prime Minister level is a very interesting process in political sphere. Every citizen who has completed 18 years of age can franchise making public participation important in the election process. With a huge voter population over 700 million, it's a challenge before the system to conduct free and fair election process at all levels whether it is a Gram Panchayat or the Lok Sabha.

It is the prime work entrusted to the Election Commission (EC) to conduct unbiased elections and ensure all the citizens can practice their right to vote without any fear or influence. It is a tough job for the Election Commission to conduct fair elections in 28 States and seven union territories by avoiding any political interference. The Election Commission has its rules and regulations called 'Model Code of Conduct' (CC) for every stakeholder involved in the election process from political parties, ruling governments, campaigns and candidates to ensure elections are conducted in a transparent manner. The Code of Conduct gives equal opportunity to all the candidates irrespective of a political party while campaigning and approaching the voters. It does not allow anyone even if the person is holding the highest office including the Prime Minister's to indulge into any kind of activity that will misuse the powers during the polls.

Lot of things have been addressed in the Code of Conduct like when it will commence, campaigning, rallies, dos and don'ts for candidates, political parties and government, media coverage etc. The detailing of the rules is very interesting to know as they focus on various polls related issues. Let's have a general idea about the Code of Conduct for the general elections. There are minor differences in the Code of Conduct when it comes to State or Panchayati Raj polls compared to the Lok Sabha polls. The Code of Conduct is enforced from the date of announcement of election schedule by the Election Commission and is operational till the process of elections is completed. During general elections, the code is applicable

Any kind of communal or casteist remarks are also barred during the election period that would hurt sentiments of the voters

Every citizen who has completed 18 years of age can franchise making public participation important in the election process

VOTING BOOTH

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ELECTION RALLY

Election Commission has restricted personal criticism or accusation while campaigning

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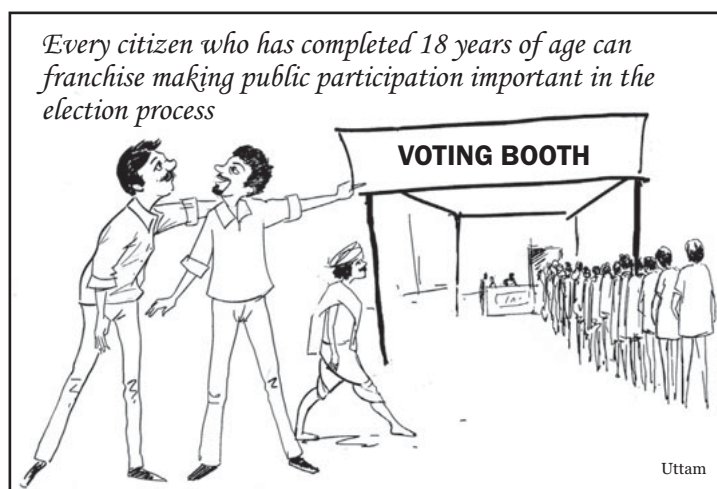
Political Parties are also prevented from announcing any financial grants in any form or promises thereof

throughout the country while during general elections to the Legislative Assembly, the code is applicable in the entire State. In the bye-elections, the code is applicable in the entire district or districts in which the constituency falls.

GENERAL CONDUCT

Political parties or candidates are not allowed to indulge in any activity which may aggravate existing differences or create mutual hatred or cause tension between different castes and communities. It has also restricted personal criticism or accusation while campaigning. Any kind of communal or casteist remarks are also barred during the election period that would hurt sentiments of the voters. It has restricted any "corrupt practices" and offences under the election law, such as bribing of voters, intimidation of voters, impersonation of voters, canvassing within 100 meters of polling stations, holding public meetings during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the close of the poll, and the transport and conveyance of voters to and from polling station. The Code of Conduct

also disallows political parties and candidates to make use of any individual's land, building, compound wall etc., without permission for erecting flag-staffs, suspending banners, pasting notices, writing slogans.

MEETINGS

In case a candidate wants to organize a peaceful rally, it is mandatory for him to inform the local police authorities of the venue and time any proposed meeting well in advance. Also the candidates should follow prohibitory order in force if any. For organizing procession, it is necessary for

the organizers to adhere to the rules like place and time and route to be followed after getting permission from the police.

It is a responsibility of the organisers to ensure that the procession does not block or cause any hindrance to the traffic. If more than one processions are scheduled by different parties, then every organiser shall take measures to avoid any clash. Every candidate has to declare his/her expenditure on campaigning to the Election Commission. In the Lok Sabha polls, the candidates are allowed to spend upto Rs 40 lakh on campaigning. But it has to give daily expenditure to the Election Commission. The financial limit is upto Rs 16 lakh for candidates contesting the Legislative Assembly. For various Municipal Corporations the limit is between Rs three lakh to five lakh.

POLLING DAY

The most important day in the election process is also followed with a set of rules to

Election Commission has restricted any "corrupt practices" and offences under the election law, such as bribing of voters

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avoid any untoward incident and give an opportunity to all candidates as well as voters to participate in the process without any hindrance or fear. The Election Commission expects co-operation from the candidates and parties with the officers on election duty to ensure peaceful and orderly polling and complete freedom to the voters to exercise their franchise without being subjected to any annoyance or obstruction. The Code of Counduct does not allow unnecessary crowd to be collected near the camps set up by the political parties and candidates near the polling booths so as to avoid confrontation and tension among workers and sympathisers of the parties and the candidate. The Election

The Code of Conduct does not allow unnecessary crowd to be collected near the camps set up by the political parties and candidates near the polling booths
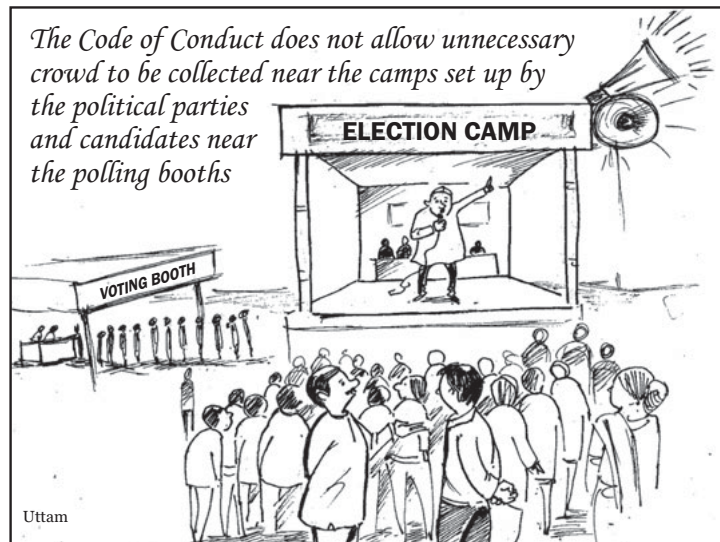
particular the ministers shall not combine their official visit with electioneering work and shall not also make use of official machinery or personnel during the electioneering work. The Government

Commission to go further. The EC gives permission for a few programmes considering the nature but makes sure that the function should be a low key affair. Utmost care has been taken by the Election Commission to ensure that no one misuses his or her power in the Code of Conduct period to influence people.

RULING PARTIES

To prevent any misuse of power, the Election Commission has restricted ruling parties from monopolising public places, use of helipads for air-flights, rest houses, official bungalows or other Government accommodation in connection with elections. It has also disallowed issuing advertisement at the cost of public exchequer in the newspapers and other media and the misuse of official mass media for propaganda during the election period .

When the election Code of Conduct is operational, the ministers and other authorities cannot sanction grants/payments by using discretionary funds. They

The Government transport including official aircrafts, vehicles, machinery and personnel shall not be used for furtherance of the interest of the party in power

Commission also appoints observers if the candidates or their agents have any specific complaint or problem regarding the conduct of elections so that they can bring it to their notice. The party in power shall ensure that no cause is given for any complaint that it has used its official position for the purposes of its election campaign. In

transport including official air-crafts, vehicles, machinery and personnel shall not be used for furtherance of the interest of the party in power. In some cases, where pre-scheduled the Government programmes like inauguration of some project or schemes fall during the Code of Conduct period, the authorities concerned should take permission from the Election

The Election Commission expects co-operation from the candidates and parties with the officers on election duty to ensure peaceful and orderly polling

are also prevented from announcing any financial grants in any form or promises thereof; or lay foundation stones of projects or schemes of any kind; or make any promise of construction of roads, provision of drinking water facilities, make any ad-hoc appointments in Government, Public Undertakings which may have the effect of influencing the voters in favour of the party in power.

However, for tackling emergencies like drought, floods, pestilences and other natural calamities, the Government has to seek approval from the Commission to release funds to the victims. Even the Government machinery has been restricted to give political speeches or make announcements in the government programmes during the polls.

There is a restriction on campaigning through SMSs after campaigning period is over

process has to be kept secret. Interestingly, the Election Commission has also taken note of use of a tool, social media and has set certain guidelines for the new media. It has differentiated the social media as collaborative projects (for example, Wikipedia), blogs and micro blogs (for example, Twitter), content communities (like YouTube), social networking sites (like Facebook) and virtual game-worlds (e.g., Apps). Candidates are required to declare their social media accounts in Form-26 at the time of filing of nominations. Following an order by the Supreme Court, the Election Commission has instructed every registered/national and State political party and every contesting candidate proposing to issue advertisements on television channels and/ or on cable

concerned, the Commission is considering the matter in consultation with the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology on practical ways to deal with the issue, in so far as they relate to, or can be reasonably connected with, the election campaigning of political parties and candidates. Even there is a restriction on campaigning through SMSs after campaigning period is over.

At times, the Election Commission has taken action against candidates or authorities who have flouted norms. There are some references available on the site of the Election Commission which shows that the authority have warned and taken action against politicians and minister and political parties for violating the code of conduct. The Election Commission has a power to cancel registration of any party if the nature of violation is grave.

The Election Commission has maintained its unique role in the vast and varied structure of Indian political system. It's important has been highlighted and remained undisputed time and again by many. Its functioning shows that even the smallest issue or person related to the election process is not ignored when it comes to the implementation of the code of conduct. The whole exercise may sound boring and technical for outsiders but we must not forget that it is shaping the entire process of election in right manner. One must appreciate pivotal role played by the EC has always strengthened the democracy in a true sense. ■

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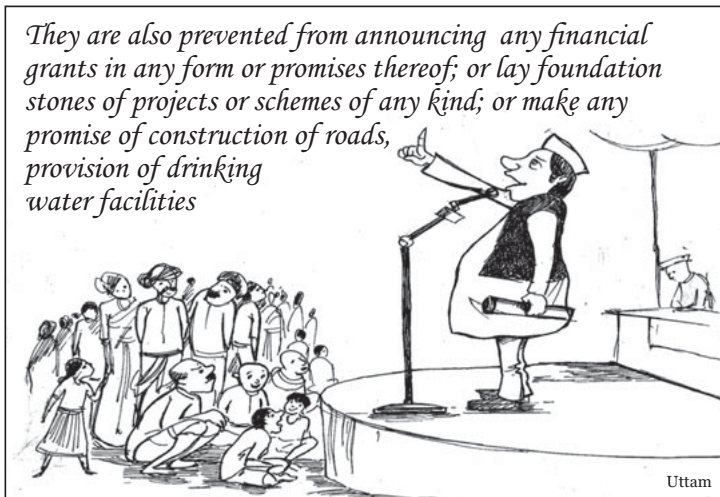
MEDIA

There are certain restriction on media on publishing stories that may hurt or influence sentiments of certain community. It is restricted from taking pictures or videos during counting or actually exercising right vote, as the

network will have to apply to Election Commission of India/designated officer for pre-certification of all political advertisements on electronic media before the publication. As far as the content posted by persons other than candidates and political parties is

Conducting Elections Smoothly

The India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management an advanced resource centre of learning, research, training and extension for participatory democracy and election management helps to impart intensive training to polling personnel says, **Prasad V. Kulkarni,** Section Officer, Mantralaya.

India is the world's largest democratic country having 11 million electorate. The biggest challenge before the Election Commission which is entrusted with the task of conducting elections is to deliver error free elections by imparting intensive training to polling personnel. Since this process involves the largest event management exercise in the world, training is of paramount importance. Millions of Government servants and other persons are directly or indirectly involved in the election process and this inevitably throws up a major human resource management challenge to the election managers and administrators.

A proper and professionally organized training forms the core of the Human Resource management. Almost all the problems/difficulties confronted during pre-poll process and on the poll day can be traced back to lack of adequate training at various levels.

The Election Commission of India has very limited staff strength of its own and it carries out the task of conducting elections through officers and staff of various administrative departments. The officers and staff from these various departments are taken on deputation for elections and after elections are over the concerned staff returns to their original departments. In order that the elections are

conducted in free environment and in an appropriate manner, it is essential that all these officers and staff are properly trained for electoral activities. It is only with the support of these officers and staff that the elections are conducted smoothly.

In order to implement this training an Institute titled IIIDEM (India International Institute of Democracy & Election Management) has been working under the aegis of Election Commission of India. IIIDEM, New Delhi has facilities for imparting training on all subjects related to elections. The Institute has expert officers and staff to handle all aspects of election training. The training here includes subjects such as Nomination, Handling EVMs, Model Code of Conduct, Law and Order, Arrangements for a Voting Booth, Filling up of various forms and others.

THREE TIER TRAINING FORMAT

Tier One: At this level the chief officers at the State handling elections at district

Election process involves the largest event management exercise in the world, training is of paramount importance

levels such as Deputy District Election Officers are trained and perfected with complete training at IIIDEM, New Delhi. After their training these officers are designated as SLMT (State Level Master Trainer).

Tier Two: On this level the

SLMT (State Level Master Trainer) trained at IIIDEM, New Delhi are expected to train officers such as ERO and AERO handling the legislature level election work. The officers trained at this level are designated as ALMT (Assembly Level Master Trainer).

Tier Three: On this level the ALMT (Assembly Level Master Trainer) is expected to train the Taluka level and village level officers and staff such as Voter Central Level Officer.

Apart from this training, the officers from other Departments at the State level such as Income Tax, State Excise Duty Department, Police Department and others are appropriately trained to carry out their duties in election process and their departments as designated under the provisions of Election Act.

Detailed information about

each topic is provided in every session of training and all queries are resolved. The extent of grasp of the election process by the trainees is ascertained with an examination after training. Apart from this a feedback regarding training/ trainers and training methodology in terms of opinion and suggestions is obtained. Considering these opinions/suggestions required improvements are carried out in the training process.

All this explains why it is essential to train the officers and staff in order to conduct elections in a fearless and impartial manner and to implement the election process appropriately under the provisions of the Election Act. IIIDEM prepares an annual Training calendar for the same. According to the calendar various training programmes are organized on a variety of subjects. The Institute also provides Refresher Training programmes for those who have already undergone training so as to revise their information and also to provide fresh inputs in the matter.

The Training Materials for

all the courses is made available by the Election Commission of India. Based on the same and considering the local conditions at State/District/ Taluka level, training materials are prepared at required levels and are used in training. Power Point Presentation is used in these training sessions so as to make the subject easy to understand for the participant trainees.

Although essential facilities for training are made available by Election Commission of India, the responsibility of training all the officers and staff connected with election process remains with the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Government of Maharashtra. Therefore the office of the Chief Electoral Officer deputes officers from the State Government for training at the IIIDEM, New Delhi. At the same time this office organizes training for various officers and staff at the level of District/Taluka/ Village through the officers who have been trained at IIIDEM, New Delhi. For this training sessions on a variety of topics are organized at various places. When necessary, the office of the Chief Electoral Officer also invites Experts from Election Commission of India, New Delhi to the State for training of officers and staff from the State. In this way the office of Chief Electoral Officer carries out a variety of responsibilities in order to encourage officers and staff on a large scale for training and also to make available the facilities for training so that the elections in the State are conducted in an appropriate manner. ■

The Voting Procedure

The right to vote and more importantly the exercise of franchise by the eligible citizens is at the heart of every democracy. We, the people, through this exercise of our right to vote have the ultimate power to shape the destiny of country by electing our representatives who run the Government. Here are some frequently asked questions about the voting process.

Who can vote?

All citizens of India who are 18 years of age as on 1st January of the year for which the electoral roll is prepared are entitled to be registered as a voter in the constituency where he or she ordinarily resides. Only persons who are of unsound mind and have been declared so by a competent court or disqualified due to 'Corrupt Practices' or offences relating to elections are not entitled to be registered in the electoral rolls.

What is an electoral roll?

An electoral roll is a list of all eligible citizens who are entitled to cast their vote in an election. The electoral rolls are prepared Assembly Constituency wise. An electoral roll for any Assembly Constituency is subdivided into parts corresponding with the polling booths. The Election Commission of India has decided to generally have a maximum of 1200 electors per booth in rural area and 1400 electors per booth in urban area. The polling booths are so set up that no voter should ordinarily travel more than 2 kms to reach the polling booth. Normally, one part will correspond with one polling booth.

To exercise your franchise, the first and foremost requirement is that your name should be in the electoral roll. Without your name registered in the relevant part for the area where you ordinarily reside in

Citizens who are 18 years of age as on 1st January of the year for which the electoral roll is prepared are entitled to be registered as a voter

the Assembly Constituency, you will not be allowed to exercise your franchise. Therefore, it is your duty to find out whether your name has been registered or not.

How to register?

The Election Commission prepares the electoral rolls through a process of intensive revision where house-to-house enumeration is done and electors residing in each house are registered by official enumerators who go physically from door-to-door to collect the information about electors. This process is done normally once in five years. Between two Intensive revisions, summary revisions are done every year during a specified period when persons who are left out of the electoral rolls are given an opportunity to register themselves by applying in Form No. 6. It is also expected from you to get your name deleted from the place where you earlier resided, and get it included at new place in case you have shifted. For this, on your part, it is sufficient that you file claim application in Form No. 6 before the Electoral Registration Officer of the new place and in that application give the full address of your earlier place of residence. Short absence from place of residence does not debar one to continue his/her name in electoral roll. Similarly, deletions are carried out of electors who have died or who have shifted residence from one area to another outside the prescribed part of the electoral roll. You should note that you can be registered only at one place. Registration in more than one place is an offence.

During Intensive Revision of electoral rolls which normally takes place once in five years, a draft roll is prepared after house to house enumeration and published at every polling booth location for inviting claims and objections. Any eligible person can file claim in Form No. 6 for inclusion of his name in the roll or raise an objection to somebody's name or for deletion of his or any other person's name in Form No. 7. Similarly if any particulars in the electoral roll are to be modified such as name, house number, middle name, last name, age, sex, epic number etc. a claim in Form No. 8 can be filed. In case any elector has changed his house from the polling area of one booth to other booth in the same Assembly Constituency he can file application in Form No. 8A for change/transposition from one electoral part to other part.

During Summary revision of electoral rolls which takes place every year, the existing electoral rolls are published at each polling booth locations to invite claims and objections for inclusion, deletion, modification and transposition. After due enquiry all the claims and objections are decided and a supplementary electoral roll is prepared and published.

Even after the final publication of electoral rolls the process of continuous updation of electoral rolls goes on and the citizens are free to file any application for the addition, deletion, modification and transposition with the Electoral Registration Officer.

As per the law, your name can be registered upto the last date of filing nominations by candidates that has been notified by the Election Commission for any general election or by-election to an Assembly or Parliament. To enable the Electoral Registration Officer to take action on your application, you must apply at least ten days before the last date of making nominations as he has to mandatorily invite objections by giving a seven clear days notice before including your name in the roll. If you apply later than ten clear days before the last date for nominations your name may not be included for the purposes of that particular election.

How to check your name in the electoral rolls and to find the polling station where you have to go to vote?

As an elector you should immediately check whether your name has been included in the electoral roll of the constituency where you reside or not. You can find out this information from the Electoral Registration Officer of your area. Electoral rolls in all major cities have now been displayed on official websites also.

Do you have an Electors' Photo Identity Card?

The Election Commission of India has made voter identification mandatory at the time of poll. The electors have to identify themselves with either Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC) issued by the Commission or any other documentary proof as prescribed by the Commission.

Will possession of an EPIC alone entitle you to vote?

You should note that mere possession of an EPIC issued to you does not guarantee you your vote, because it is mandatory that your name should appear in the electoral roll.

Once you have found out that your name is there in the electoral roll and you also possess an identification document prescribed by the Election Commission (EPIC or others), you are entitled to vote.

Before you come to the polling booth, there are some other important aspects that you need to know as an elector and a conscientious citizen of the country.

What is the Disclosure by Candidates?

Recently the Election Commission of India has made it mandatory consequent upon a Judgment of Hon'ble Supreme Court that all candidates must file an affidavit along with their nomination form with details such as:-
i. his/her criminal antecedents,
ii. his/her assets and liabilities and those of his/her spouse and dependents, and

iii. his/her educational background.

This has been done with a view that every citizen has a right to know about the candidates contesting an election and make an informed choice.

The Election Commission has directed all Returning Officers to display the copies of nomination papers and accompanying affidavits received during any day on his notice board immediately on receipt and make copies of these for distribution to the press and any members of public who want this information, free of cost.

Any citizen of the country can obtain copies of the nomination form and the affidavit filed by any candidate from the Returning Officer and it shall not be refused. As a voter you have every right to seek this information and get it.

The details of the dues owed by the candidates to the Government are published by giving an advertisement

in the leading newspapers by the Returning Officer for the benefit of electors.

Above measures help the electors make an informed choice about the candidate they are going to vote for.

Can you decline to cast your vote at the last stage?

The law enables a voter to decline casting his vote at the last stage. If you decide not to cast your vote after having signed on the Register of Voters and after having received the voters' slip from the Second Polling Officer, you must inform the Presiding Officer immediately. He will then take back the voters' slip from you and proceed to record in the remarks column of the Register of Voters that you have declined to exercise your franchise and you will be required to put your signature under such entry. After this is done, you can leave the polling station without proceeding to the Voting Compartment.

The polling booths are so set up that no voter should ordinarily travel more than 2 kms to reach the polling booth

The law enables a voter to decline casting his vote at the last stage

What happens when your vote is challenged?

In case your identity as a voter is challenged by a polling agent of any candidate, on the ground that you are not the person whose name is listed on the rolls, the Presiding Officer will ask the challenger to give evidence in proof, of |his challenge. Similarly, he will ask you for proof of your identity. You can use your EPIC or any other supporting document like Passport, Ration card etc. for this purpose. If the challenge is not established, you will be allowed to vote. However, if challenge is established, you will be debarred from voting and handed over to the police with a written complaint by the Presiding Officer.

What happens if someone else has cast the vote in your name?

If the First Polling Officer tells you on arrival inside the polling station that your vote has already been cast, bring this to the attention of the Presiding Officer immediately. The law allows you to cast a Tendered Vote. A Tendered Ballot Paper, as per Rule 49P of the Conduct of Elections Rules, will be given to you and you will be required to sign your name on the list of tendered votes. A tendered ballot paper is the same as the ballot paper displayed on the balloting unit, except that it shall be endorsed on the back, with the words, "Tendered Ballot Paper" either stamped by the Returning or written by the Presiding Officer at the time of issuing it.

After marking your choice of candidate with the help of Arrow Cross Mark rubber stamp you should hand over the tendered ballot paper to the Presiding Officer, who will keep it in a separate cover. Please note that in such case, you will not cast your vote on the EVM.

What are the grievance redressal mechanisms available to you?

If you have any grievance in regard to electoral roll, Electors Photo Identity Card or any other election related matter you may approach following Officers:

Chief Electoral Officer - At the State Level
District Election Officer - At the District Level
Returning Officer - At the Constituency Level
Assistant Returning Officer - At Taluka/Tehsil Level
Electoral Registration Officer - At the Constituency Level
Presiding Officer - At Polling Station
Zonal Officer - For a group of Polling stations

During every election, the Commission appoints Observers who are senior civil service officers from outside the State. If you have any grievances or problems, you should approach them. ■

Sowing the Seeds of Democracy

The responsibility of holding elections to the local self government bodies has been entrusted to the State Election Commission. People get the training in democratic systems through the medium of local self government bodies. This shows the importance of elections to local self government bodies and its scope, says **Smt. Neela Satyanarayana,** State Election Commissioner.

The Election Commission of India is regarded as guardian of free and fair elections. It is responsible for conducting elections to both the Houses of Parliament and State Legislatures and for the offices of President and Vice-President. In every election, the Election Commission issues a Model Code of Conduct for political parties and candidates to conduct elections in a free and fair manner.

State Election Commission (SEC) and the Election Commission of India (ECI) are two independent statutory bodies. The Election Commission of India has been entrusted with the responsibility of conducting elections to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) look after the Election Commission of India's work in the States. The Election Commission of India and the State Election Commission have similar powers.

The responsibility of holding elections to the local self government bodies has been entrusted to the State Election Commission. People get the training in democratic systems through the medium of local self government bodies and to sow the seeds of democracy at the grassroot through elections. This shows the importance of elections to local self government bodies and its scope. These institutions include Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils, Zilla Parishads, Panchayat Samitis and Gram Panchayats. The State Election Commission has been set up with the sole idea of conducting free and fair elections to these institutions under Article 243 K and 243 ZA of the Constitution of India.

WEBSITE

The State Election Commission has set up its own website www.mahasec.com on which all the information with regards to the Commission, Government Resolutions and other information is available. Websites of those Municipal Corporations whose elections are to be held are also readied and they can be searched and would be visible on the State Election Commission website. Wards in concerned Municipal Corporations/Councils reservations and their maps etc would be available on the website. Also available will be the information about on polling booths.

The responsibility of holding elections to the local self- government bodies has been entrusted to the SEC

During the period of elections, day-to-day reports on election, details of expenditure of candidates, their declaration on criminal background, if any, and property would be uploaded on the sites. This gives a correct picture of the candidates.

This website has been honoured by the State Marathi Development Organisation and CDAC and was awarded the "EDGE (Enterprises Driving and Excellence Through IT) 2012" award for maximum use of Information Technology.

The Maharashtra Election Commission was formed on April 26, 1994, to conduct all rural and urban local body's elections. It is an independent agency of the Government of Maharashtra, and is responsible for elections to the Muncipal Corporations, Municipalities, Municipal Councils, Panchayat Samitis, Gram Panchayats, Zilla Parishads and other local government bodies. The elections in this State are conducted in accordance with the Constitution of India.

State Election Commission carries out activities related to preparation of wards/election division as per local bodies

Facility of Braile script has also been made to facilitate blind voters to cast their votes

rules, decision of boundaries and distribution of seats along with preparation of voters list for the local bodies organizations like Gram Panchayat, Taluka and District Panchayat/Municipality and Municipal Corporations of the State and conducting general/ mid-term/by-elections and supervising them. For all these functions, the authority is vested in the State Election Commission under Article 243K under which it has been empowered with Superintendence, Direction and Control of elections of local bodies.

As per the election rules of such local self government organizations, District Election Officer for Panchayat elections, District Municipal Election Officer for elections of municipality and City Election Officer for the elections of municipal corporation have been appointed. State Election

commission has empowered the collectors for all activities related to elections of Gram Panchayats where as the delimitation and allocation of seats for various reserved categories, voter's list, election programmes and other related activities are carried out by State Election Commission.

A term of six years is fixed for the Chief Election Commissioner from the date on which he assumes office. At the age of sixty-five, irrespective of whether the six-year term

has been completed or not, the Commissioner has to vacate his office. At present, Smt. Neela Satyanarayana is the State Election Commissioner with effect from July 6, 2009. She is the first woman to hold this prestigious post of State Election Commissioner in Maharashtra. She is an IAS Officer of the 1972 batch. The State Election Commission appoints officers to dutifully carry out its activities and various procedures.

FIVE YEARS OF FUNCTIONING OF SEC
Improvements in Polling Centres

The Commission has been making all out efforts to ensure that the voters exercise their right to vote and increasing the polling percentage. A special care is being taken for the senior citizens, the aged, pregnant women and handicapped people so that they can exercise their right to vote. Facilities like making ramps and ensuring that their booths are on the ground floor are undertaken by the State Election Commission. As per the criteria for the polling centres, it is ensured that voting booths are within two km range of the voters and are in the centrally located areas, mainly in government, semi-government buildings. Care is also taken to ensure that voters do not face the problem like heat and rains and that the polling centres are equipped with drinking water and toilets.

Maximum voters in a booth is kept low so that there are not very long queues and that the voters are being cast their votes easily. Every voting

centre in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation will have a maximum of 1,000 voters, while the remaining Municipal Corporations, Zilla Parishads, Panchayat Samitis and Gram Panchayats elections would have a maximum of 800 voters in every centre and that municipal councils would have 600 voters.

IMPROVEMENTS IN ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES

As per the improvements, the voting machines will now have serial numbers of the machines and their memory. Also information about ward number, polling centre number would also be available. In case of change in memory, there would be indications. A 'Non-clonable' tag have been put at the sensitive part

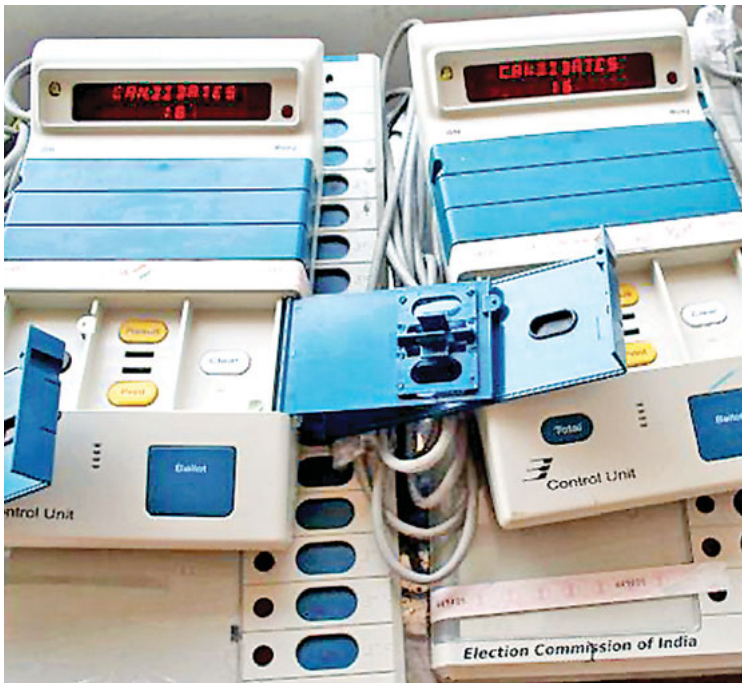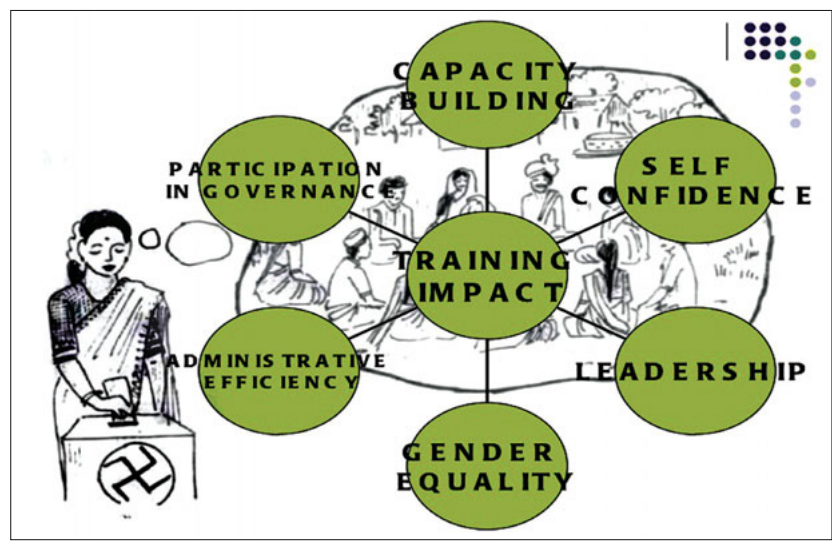of the voting machine, hence no alterations can be made. If any alterations are tried to be done, the machine will automatically stop functioning. Hence, ward and voting machine's serial number, and so also the timings of incidents in the machine and battery capacity is being displayed. Besides, facility of Braile script has also been made to facilitate blind voters to cast their votes. In keeping with the Supreme Court order, the State Election Commission has provided the option of NOTA (None of the Above) on its EVMs for the local self Government bodies elections.

KRANTI JYOTI PROJECT

The State Election Commission has undertaken 'Kranti Jyoti' Project in coordination with NGOs for training of women elected in the local self government bodies elections. Initially, the project was launched for women elected to Gram Panchayats in ten districts. During the project, a team of women trainers from State level to village level was formed. The present focus is development of women's personality by enlightening them on the functioning of the Gram Panchayats, burning social issues and government programmes. During the training, the women members are guided on the functioning of Panchayat Raj, Gram Panchayat Act, financial management of Gram Panchayats. The project has been given the name of "Kranti Jyoti" to mark the contribution of Savitribai Phule to women's education and their empowerment. ∎

A 'Non-clonable' tag have been put at the sensitive part of the ELectronic Voting Machine because of which no alterations can be made

New Weapons of Campaigning

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other networking sites are becoming one of the most popular mediums and are set to play a very vital role in influencing the outcome of general elections in at least 160 Lok Sabha constituencies says, **Chandran Iyer**.

Social media is set to play a very vital and decisive role in influencing the outcome of general elections in at least 160 Lok Sabha constituencies

Social Media is poised become the most potent weapon for political parties gearing up for the 2014 general elections. Besides propaganda work, it is also becoming a very strong medium for taking pot shots at the rivals and mocking at them. Morphed photographs of politicians in the Facebook, twisted quotes from their speeches, vitriolic political comments in Twitter about their actions and some below-the-belt jokes about them are becoming popular in the social networking sites.

Sensing the explosive growth of the social media, the political parties are becoming tech savvy as they realize that this is the best way to reach and influence the young voters. This is because of 790 million eligible Indian voters, about 160 million are first-time voters between the ages of 18 and 24 years old. Many of them are techno savvy especially those from urban areas.

In fact the social networking media like Facebook, Twitter and other platforms greatly influenced the outcome of the 2012 US Presidential elections. Not only was Obama the first African American to be elected president, but he was also the first presidential candidate to effectively use social media as a major campaign strategy. Now it is expected that the same will happen in the Indian elections too, though on a lesser scale given the fact that the penetration of internet is much less here. Hence the effects of social media will be limited by the number of Internet users in India.

Political parties are realizing that dynamics of campaigning are fast changing. Instead of relying on the old method of cardboard cutouts, poster campaigns and house-to-house campaigning, it is more effective to use social media to get their messages across.

This is why the parties including the Congress, Bhartiya Janata Party, Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party and others have their developed own website and are becoming active in the social media to showcase the party profile, their goals in near future and what the public can expect from them.

They are aware that an issue breaking out on Twitter or Facebook is more likely to catch eyeballs than any conventional media. Besides the social media is being seen as a direct connect with the people for two way communication.

ECI TO MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENTS

To ensure decorum in online election campaigning, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has decided to monitor the content that political parties and candidates post on the internet and social media websites for any violation of electoral laws and model code of conduct.

Hence the Commission has issued guidelines on the use of social media in election campaigning. This is the first time the ECI is issuing such guidelines. So far, the Election Commission of India has only been monitoring content posted in print and television media.

According to the new guidelines, all candidates have to declare in their affidavits information about their email and social media accounts. Further, all political advertisement on "internet-based websites or social media websites" will need "pre-certification" from the Commission. The provisions of the model code of conduct will also apply to all the content posted on the internet.

SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

Just how significant is the scale of this social media outreach? According to a recent study, social media is set to play a very vital and decisive role in influencing the outcome of general elections in at least 160 Lok Sabha constituencies.

A study conducted by IRIS Knowledge Foundation and Internet and Mobile Association of India (IMAI) says, "There are 160 high impact constituencies out of the total of 543 constituencies, which are likely be influenced by social media during the next general elections." In other words, it may certainly influence urban voters like never before.

India has about 62 million social media users and the numbers are continually increasing. The study categorises high impact constituencies as those where "Facebook users account for over 10 per cent of total voters in a constituency." Even though, the country's internet penetration is relatively low; about 150 million people out of a total population of 1.2 billion go online. According to the IRIS-IMAI survey, these numbers are poised to go up as Election Day approaches.

According to a study on social media usage by The Nielsen Company conducted in collaboration with AbsolutData, nearly 30 million Indians who are online are members of social networking sites and about two-thirds of them spend time on these social networking sites on a daily basis.

More importantly, says the study, Indians spend more time on social media than they do using personal email. According to it, an equal number spend up to an hour on social networking and email. However, while just 8 per cent spend between an hour and three hours on personal email, 20 per cent spend the same time on social media sites.

The growth of social media has given rise to a new breed of entrepreneurs whose job it is to provide specialized election-related services to individual candidates or to political parties using the digital platform. In this, they are taking the help of software professionals. In some instances, political parties are outsourcing work to newly-cropped IT companies which provide niche information of the kind they require.

Many companies help in deploying state-of-the art telephony system along with updated voting slip database and putting into place a call centre where voters can call for getting detailed voting slips on their mobile along with the name of their leader.

During the Karnataka assembly elections, political parties set up their own election cells with IT experts and professionals to propagate party agenda and to take liberal pot shots at the opposition.

A report on Social Media in India by the IAMAI and Indian Market Research Bureau, says about 74 per cent of all active internet users in urban India use social media. It ranks after email (80 per cent) in terms of usage. As per the findings, of the 80 million active internet users in urban India, 72 per cent (about 58 million individuals) have accessed some form of social networking.

Companies that offer services to political parties include broadcasting text messages and candidate voice broadcasts in several constituencies, helping to increase website traffic of the political parties, posting of real time videos of leaders and their press conferences on networking sites and a special application which contains the profiles of candidates and advertised it on internet-enabled mobile phones.

Experts feel that elections 2014 are going to be a game

ECI has decided to monitor the content that political parties and candidates post on the internet and social media websites

FACEBOOK, THE MOST ACCESSED

- Facebook is India's most accessed website with 97 per cent of individuals using it.
- However, LinkedIn has the highest proportion among women and users above 25 years. In fact, LinkedIn has the second highest average time spent only after Facebook.
- According to a study, ``the average time spent by Indian netizens was 29.6 minutes on weekdays as compared to 28.8 minutes on weekend.
- With the use of social media, people are building virtual communities and pressure groups. Many parents have formed groups to keep in touch with their wards and schools.
- About 60% of the social networking traffic come from Non Metro-Cities but the highest traffic generating city still remains to be a Metro i.e. Mumbai

changer as far as social media is concerned. They believes that the explosive growth of social media will reduce the scourge of paid news phenomena where news is `planted' in newspapers for monetary gains.

Most political parties concur on the role of social media. Many agree that the social media is going to play a big role in influencing voters as it is more personal and real time. But on the flip side it remains to be seen how much it influences urban voters to actually go out and vote because generally it has been observed that those active in the virtual world are not socially active. ■

Evolution of Electoral System

As the background of elections to Parliament is connected with the background of establishment of this House, it is essential to state a brief history of establishment of this House, says Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, **Anil Valvi.**

The present Rajya Sabha was established on the 3rd April 1952 and the first session of the same was held on the 13th May 1952

E lections in India, whether at the national or State levels unfold a fascinating story and it is one of the biggest equalizers because, this is a process in which the rich and poor, male and the female have equal opportunity to participate to decide the future of a Government.

As the background of elections to Parliament is connected with the background of establishment of this House, it is essential to state a brief history of establishment of this House.

Parliament is the Apex Legislative House of the Nation and Indian Parliament is constituted with President of India, Lok Sabha (Lower House) and Rajya Sabha (Upper House). All the elected members of both houses of the Parliament and elected members of State Legislatures are designated voters in the election for President of India. Out of the two houses of the Parliament Rajya Sabha is a permanent House. The present Rajya Sabha was established on the 3rd April 1952 and the first session of the same was held

Gopal Krishna Gokhale

on the 13th May 1952. The then first Speaker Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan announced a change in the name of this House from Council of State to Rajya Sabha on the 23rd August 1954. In terms of Para 80 of the Constitution of India the maximum strength of members for this House has been decided as 250. The present Rajya Sabha has 245 members out of which 233 members are elected by the members of State Legislatures with certified election process and 12 members are nominated by the President of India. For the Lok Sabha 545 members are elected from various States with voters from constituencies casting their votes directly.

After the 1857 revolt the British Government took away the governance of India

from East India Company and acquired the same itself under Government of India Act, 1858. Earlier in 1757 Plassy War and after 1764 Baksar War the rights to collect revenue from Bengal and Bihar were with East India Company. In order to accentuate British Government involvement the British Parliament had passed Regulating Act 1773. Under this Act provision of a Council with four members was made in order to assist the Governor General. British occupied Madras and Mumbai Provinces were brought under Governor General of Bengal. This was then designated as Governor General Council or Calcutta Council. Supreme Court was established at Fort Williams, Calcutta. The system was in place till 1784. In 1784 the Pits of India Act was passed. Under the 1784 Act the number of members on the Council was enhanced to 6. This did not get much amendment till 1853. Under the 1853 Act the number of members was raised to 12 and an Annual Competitive Examination for appointment to the Indian Civil Service. However Indians had no place

Pherozeshah Mehta

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

here. After 1857 revolt the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act 1858.

According to the 1858 Act the reign of East India Company on India came to an end and the British regime took over providing powers for appointment of Governor General. Under the same Act a post of Secretary of State was created and a Secretary Council was created to assist this Secretary of State. Governor General of Bengal was designated as Viceroy. Legislative Council at Calcutta was accorded all powers to enact laws for entire India and Mumbai and Madras Councils were bestowed with powers for their own provinces in order for functioning of their Government. The Governor General was further bestowed with powers to create new provinces for Legislative purpose. However these Legislatures had limited powers just for consultation purposes but were denied permission for discussion on financial matters. Indians

were now permitted to appear for Indian Civil Service examinations.

The true beginning of Indian Parliamentary Democracy was after passing the Indian Council Act 1892. Earlier to this the Indian National Congress had passed resolutions to this effect in 1885 and 1889 sessions. This Act provided an increase in the number of members and also allowed Calcutta, Madras, Mumbai and North-West provinces to send one representative each to the Indian Council. The provisions of this Act were prevailing till 1909. Under this Act a total of 33 members were nominated as members of the Indian Council between 1893 and 1909. Pherozshah Mehta (1893-1901), Aga Khan (1903), Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1903-1909) were also included here.

Eligibility criteria of voters for Council of State was decided as a person who pays income tax on an income of not less than Rs. 10,000, or a person paying agricultural taxes above Rs. 750 or a person who is eligible to be become a Senate Member of a University. Therefore out of a population of 24 Crore people only 17,364 were found eligible as voters in Council of State. Women were not provided with a right to vote.

The number of members at the Central Legislative Council was decided at 145. It was provided that 41 members from these would be appointed by nomination and 104 will be appointed through elections. Constituencies were created for candidates contesting elections. The tenure at Central Legislative Council was 3 years.

The then first Speaker Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan announced a change in the name of this House from Council of State to Rajya Sabha on the 23rd August 1954

Out of the 103 members getting elected under this Act, 51 were General, 30 from Muslim Constituencies, 2 Sikh, 9 European, 7 Landlords and 4 from industrialists. Later 1 member each from Delhi, Ajmer, Mewad and Northwest Frontier was decided.

The voter eligibility criteria for Central Legislative Council was fixed as a person who should be residing in an owned or rental house with an entitlement of rent of Rs. 180 or pays Rs. 15 as Annual Municipal Corporation Tax or a person who pays annual Income Tax of Rs. 2,000. According to these norms, there were 9,09,874 eligible voters in the 1920 elections.

GENERAL ELECTIONS - 1920

Elections to the Rajya Sabha and Central Legislative Council created under the 1920 Act were held in November 1920. India was a witness to the Non-cooperation Movement at the time. Therefore the Indian National Congress boycotted the elections and did not participate in the same.

Elections were held for 66 out of 104 seats and 6 European seats to the Indian Legislative Council. In the Rajya Sabha (Council of State) 24 out of the 34 seats were contested. In the Provincial Council Elections 440 out of 637 seats were contested and with only a single contender at 188 seats the elections were declared unopposed. Not even a single candidature application was filed for 6 seats.

The Party position of elected members to the Central Legislative Council was: Democratic Party - 48; Other

Rajya Sabha has 245 members out of which 233 members are elected by the members of State Legislatures and 12 members are nominated by the President of India

Parties and independents – 47; European -9; Total -104.

Leader of the Democratic Party was Harisingh Gaur. On the 9th February 1921 the session was inaugurated by British Prince Duke of Connaught of Sterthen who was on a visit to India at Metcalfe House, Delhi. On the 12th February 1921 the foundation stone was laid for the new building of Parliament and on the 18th January 1927 the new building was inaugurated at the hands of Viceroy and Governor General Lord Irwin. This is the present Parliament House.

Council of State was a permanent House and the Central Legislative Assembly had a term of 3 years. Hence the general elections were held in 1923, 1926, 1930 and 1934. Here there were no major changes in the 1919 Act. However 1934 elections saw women getting a right to vote. Hence the total number of voters for 1934 elections stood at 14,15,892. The number of voters in constituencies where the elections were contested

was 11,35,899 out of which 6,08,198 voters exercised their franchise. Out of the total women voters numbering 81,602 the women voters from constituencies where elections were held numbered 62,757. Out of these 14,505 women exercised their voting rights.

After this the Government of India Act 1935 was passed and under the same Provincial Legislative Assembly elections were held. However the election to the Central Legislative Assembly was not held. After the end of World War II Lord Vevel announced elections to the Central and Provincial Legislative Assembly on the 19th September 1945 and also announced that an executive committee will be appointed for preparation of a Constitution after the elections. This election was proposed under the 1935 Act as an election of the All India Federation for 375 members. However as the local rulers of the princely States opposed the move this election was conducted under the 1919 Act for 102 seats. Indian National Congress won a highest number with 59 seats at this election. The Party position in this election was as follows:

Indian National Congress – 59 (Leader Sarat Chandra Bose); Muslim League - 30 (Leader Mohammad Ali Jinnah); Akali Dal - 2 ; Independents – 3; European - 8 (Leader P. J. Grffiths).

As the local rulers of princely States did not participate in this election it was necessary to conduct fresh elections in order to appoint an executive committee for preparation of the Constitution. As such this election proved short-lived. ■

A Historical Perspective of
General Elections

The conduction of elections and the formation of a democratically elected Government was a great test for India and her administration, as many across the world had doubts about the success of democracy in India. This was more so as India had a mere 15 per cent literate population, according a BBC report of the First General Elections in India, says **Abhay Mokashi**.

T hough India attained Freedom on August 15, 1947, it took nearly four years for her to form the parliament and to have a Government of Independent India.

Before Independence, India had a Parliament, which was known as the Imperial Legislative Council and the two houses of that Parliament were known as the Central Legislative Assembly - the Lower House, now the Lok Sabha and the Council of States - the Upper House, today's Rajya Sabha. The first general elections in the country were held in 1920 for election to the Central Legislative Assembly, but these elections were under the British Rule. However, there are several historical references of democratic processes being followed in ancient India.

When India attained Independence, it was still not clear as to what form of Government she would have as we were yet to adopt a Constitution. The interim Government at the time of Independence was led by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who became the Prime Minister heading that interim government.


The Constitution drafted by the Constituent Assembly was adopted by it on November 26, 1949 and came into effect on January 26, 1950, paving the way for the conduction of the First General Elections of Independent India.

The biggest challenge was also to ensure that the elections are conducted freely, without the influence of the Government in power, not merely during the First General Elections, but for all times to come. Making this an essential requirement, the framers of the Constitution made way for the formation of the Election Commission of India, an independent statutory body responsible for the conduction of free and fair elections.

The Election Commission had been set up on January

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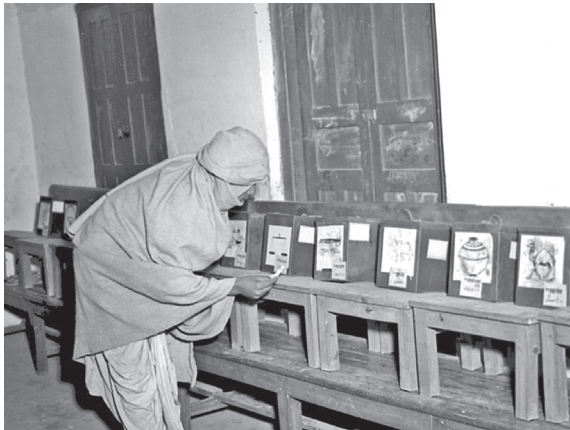
According to the Election Commission of India, 17,32,13,635 voters were registered in the whole of India, of these, approximately 45 per cent were women voters

25, 1950 and the Chief Election Commissioner assumed charge on March 21, 1950.

It was assumed that the elections would be held in 1950, but that was not possible for a variety of reasons viz. the Electoral Law had not been passed; the constituencies reserved for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes had to be specified by a Presidential order, as was required statutorily; the delimitation of constituencies had to be worked out and electoral rolls had to be prepared.

Making a statement in the Parliament on April 19, 1950, Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru expressed the hope that the elections would be held sometime in 1951.

The General Elections were held under The Representation of People Act, 1951, the base for which was The Representation of People Act, 1950. Section 14 of the Act says, "A general election shall be held for the purpose of constituting a new House of the People on the expiration of the duration of the existing House or on its dissolution…" In this case, it was for the formation of the first such House.

The conduction of elections and the formation of a democratically elected Government was a great test for India and her administration, as many across the world had doubts about the success of democracy in India. This was more so as India had a mere 15 per cent literate population, according a BBC report of the First General Elections in India.

Elections had been held for different Provincial Legislatures before the First General Elections, but, these were not on the basis of universal adult suffrage and the voting right was based on taxation, property, level of literacy, caste, community and the like. Travancore was the only exception to this, as it adopted the universal adult suffrage in 1948. Though there was opposition for universal adult suffrage from some quarters in the country, there were many in favour of it. In fact, in 1928, the Nehru Committee, which was

HOW ELECTION SYMBOL ALLOCATED

There was also a valid criticism that majority of the voters being illiterate, will not be able to read the names of the candidates and the political parties on the ballot paper, thus there would be no secrecy in voting, as they would be forced to take the help of a literate person. A solution to this was found in the use of election symbols, with political parties getting a fixed symbol across the country and independent candidates being given symbols for their respective constituencies.

The Election Commission held a meeting of representatives of political parties in New Delhi to discuss the allocation of symbols to the political parties. The meeting, which was presided over by the Chief Election Commissioner, was attended by representatives of Indian National Congress, All India Forward Bloc (Ruikar Group), All India Forward Bloc (Marxist Group), Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha, Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party, Akhil Bharatiya Ram Rajya Parishad and Socialist Party. The parties gave its preferences for the symbols and the Communist Party of India wrote to the Commission giving its preferences for the symbols.

The Election Commission announced the allocation of symbols in two stages - on August 2 and 17, 1951. An interesting point about the symbols is that in the first list, the All India Forward Bloc (Ruikar Group) was given the symbol of its first preference, that being the human hand, which is today the symbol of the Indian National Congress.

appointed by the All Parties Conference to determine the principles of the Constitution of India, had recommended universal adult suffrage, after weighing the arguments for and against it.

Yet, there were different views on the issue and some of those favouring universal adult suffrage also suggested that it should be included in the Constitution as a Fundamental Right. It was the faith of the framers of the Constitution in the Indian masses, that eventually led to the acceptance of universal adult suffrage and it was incorporated in Article 326 of the Constitution, which states that elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assembly of every State shall be held on the basis of adult suffrage.

Preparing the electoral rolls was a very important task, though the electoral rolls for the 1949 elections were ready. The problem, however, was that those electoral rolls mentioned whether a voter was a Muslim, Christian or a member of the Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe. With the abolition of the reservation of constituencies on the basis of religion that column was not required, except for the purpose of identification of a member of the Scheduled caste or Scheduled Tribe in case he or she wished to contest the elections from there reserved constituency.

Another hurdle in the preparation of the electoral rolls was that the definition of citizen of India had not been finalised by the Constituent Assembly and the status of those who had migrated from Pakistan had to be decided upon. The issue was resolved by the Constituent Assembly, which decided that a person who had migrated from Pakistan could register as a voter anywhere in the country, by merely giving a declaration that he/she wishes to reside permanently in that place. This brought about a significant change in the electoral rolls prepared for the earlier elections. Also, the qualifying date for reference to age and for being a resident of a constituency was also revised, which resulted in increase in the number of voters.

A methodology was also worked out to ensure that every district had an electoral roll and that relevant parts be available in every tehsil, panchayat office, police station etc.

According to the Election Commission of India, 17,32,13,635 voters were registered in the whole of India, (excluding Jammu & Kashmir), of these, approximately 45 per cent were women voters. The total population of India (excluding Jammu & Kashmir) according to the 1951 census was 35,66,91,760, which means 49 per cent of the total population had registered as voters. The figures also revealed that most of the persons above the age of 21 years by the census of 1951 had enrolled themselves as voters.

Unlike in the Western World, where the political parties have to take initiative to register the citizens as voters, right from the First General Elections, the Election Commission of India took the initiative to do so in our country and the result was the huge number of people registered as voters.

The Election Commission also came across an odd situation in case of a large number of women voters in the country, while finalising the electoral rolls for the First General Elections; these women were not registered in their names, but were recorded describing their relationship with a male member of the family like somebody's mother/daughter/wife. This was because conservative women would not give their names to strangers and followed the system with the enumerators. However, the Election Commission issued strict instructions to the

> **The Election Commission issued strict instructions to the enumerators to ensure that the names of the women were recorded properly so that they get the right to vote**

HISTORY OF BALLOT

A ballot is a device used to cast votes in an election, and may be a piece of paper or a small ball used in secret voting.[1] It was originally a small ball (see blackballing) used to record decisions made by voters.

Each voter uses one ballot, and ballots are not shared. In the simplest elections, a ballot may be a simple scrap of paper on which each voter writes in the name of a candidate, but governmental elections use pre-printed to protect the secrecy of the votes. The voter casts his/her ballot in a box at apolling station.

In British English, this is usually called a "ballot paper. The word ballot is used for an election process within an organisation (such as a trade union "holding a ballot" of its members).

he word ballot comes from Italian ballotta, meaning a "small ball used in voting" or a "secret vote taken by ballots" in Venice, Italy

The first use of paper ballots to conduct an election appears to have been in Rome in 139 BC.

In Ancient India, around 920 AD, in Tamil Nadu, Palm leaves were used for village assembly elections. The palm leaves with candidate names, will be put inside a mud pot, for counting. This was called Kudavolaisystem.

enumerators to ensure that the names of the women were recorded properly so that they get the right to vote.

A one-month extension was given in Bihar and Rajasthan for women to register their correct names. While the response to this move was very good in Bihar, very few women from Rajasthan came forward to take advantage of the extension.

Yet the situation cannot be said to be good, as of the 80 million women on the voter list, only about 71 million remained, with the names of the remaining being dropped for failure to disclose their proper names. Most of these women belonged to the States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan and Vindhya Pradesh.

Printing of the electoral rolls was a stupendous task and the Election Commission has recorded that 3,84,215 reams of paper were used for the printing of the rolls.

The Election Commission

The cost per voter for the First General Elections came to 4.8 annas

purchased 24,73,850 steel ballot boxes from various suppliers in the country, using 8,165.45 tonnes of steel for the purpose. Apart from this, 1,11,095 boxes made from wood had to be used in Madras State as the supplier there failed to honour the commitment for steel ballot boxes. The total cost of ballot boxes came to Rs 1,22,87,349.

The cost per voter for the First General Elections came to 4.8 annas.
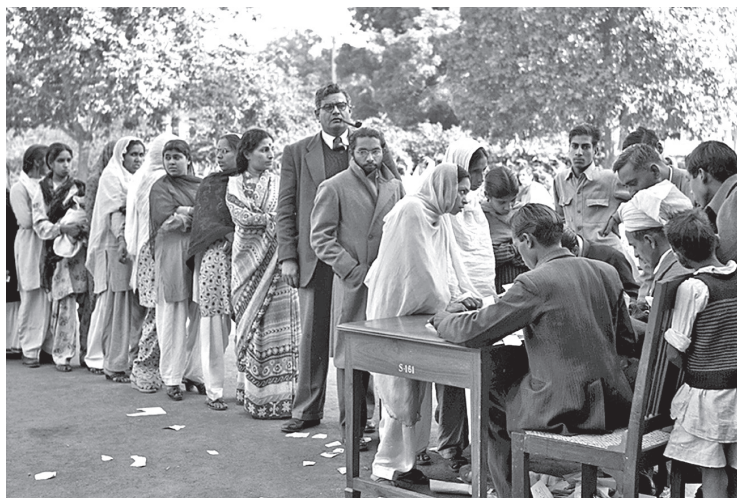
To ensure that the elections

are conducted properly and in order to familiarise the electoral staff with the procedures, a rehearsal was held in Udaipur, Rajasthan on August 5, 1951.

The First General Election in the country was a very long process, with the commencement on September 10, 1951 and conclusion on June 4, 1952. The actual casting of votes was in Chini and Pangi in Himachal. These assembly constituencies were the first to go to the polls on October 25, 1951 and the parliamentary polls for these segments were also held simultaneously, as was the case in other parts of the country. This was to ensure that the conduction of polls was over before the snowfall began.

There were many aspirants to the First Lok Sabha, with 2,833 candidates filing their nominations. However, 1,874 remained in the fray with the nomination of 133 being rejected and 826 aspirants withdrawing their candidature.

Fifty-three political parties participated in the First General Elections, of which 14 were national parties.

Another important task was the delimitation of constituencies. The First Lok Sabha was to be of 497 elected members and two members from the Anglo-Indian were to be nominated by the President of India under Article 331 of the Constitution, bringing the strength of the House to 499. There were some multi-seat constituencies, which were abolished in 1960.

Since the election process was spread over a long period of time, it gave enough time for aspirants to reach out to the people. As the results show, most of those elected were already known to the people at large due to their participation in the Freedom Movement, social and political fields or as members of the Constituent Assembly. The difficulty was for the lesser known candidates and parties, who had to make all efforts to reach out the people. Many resorted to prabhat pheris, which were popularised during the struggle for Independence. Apart from this, bicycles and bullock carts were the known means of transport for most candidates to reach out to the voters.

The political parties also concentrated on educating the voters on the electoral process, making the task of the Commission easy.

A trend that started during the First General Elections continues even today; Newspapers mushroomed during that period primarily to advocate the policies and stand of one party or the other. The Election Commission of India has noted that 397 newspapers started during the period and most ceased publication soon after the elections.
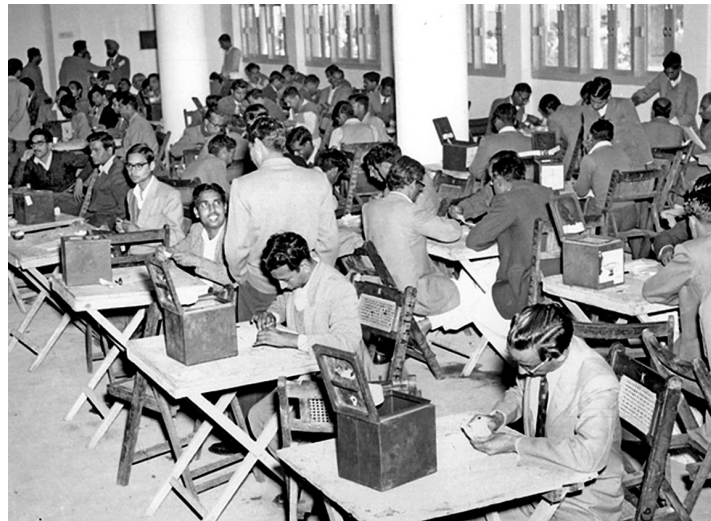
The Press also helped in educating the voters about the elections, carrying features and even answering questions from readers on the elections, thus helping the Election Commission in its task. Central and State Governments came out with documentary films on elections and the Election Commission ensured that these films were free from political bias. The Chief Election Commissioner gave several talks over All India Radio to educate the voters on the elections.

A thought was given to allot time to the political parties on All India Radio for propaganda, but given the large number of parties and being unsure of the credentials of some of them, the Commission advised the Government against allotting time on All India Radio to political parties.

The voter turnout was around 51.15 per cent and of the 2,96,828 postal ballots issued, 1,07,000 exercised their votes.

The counting of votes was a stupendous task and in one two-seat parliamentary constituency in Uttar Pradesh, the counting went on for 20 days.

The Indian National Congress, which contested 479 seats, won 364 seats, while the next highest numbers of seats were won by the Communist Party of India, which won 16 of the 49 seats it contested. The Socialist Party, which won 12 seats, had put up 254 candidates.

The First Lok Sabha was constituted on April 17, 1952 with G V Mavalankar as the first Speaker of the Lok Sabha.

The First Lok Sabha saw eminent members in the House, prominent among them being Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, V N Gadgil, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr C D Deshmukh, Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh, Babu Jagjivan Ram, Gulzarilal Nanda, S Nijalingappa, R Venkataraman, Harindranath Chhatopadhyaya, Dr Karni Singh amd Dr Shyama Prasad Mookerjee.
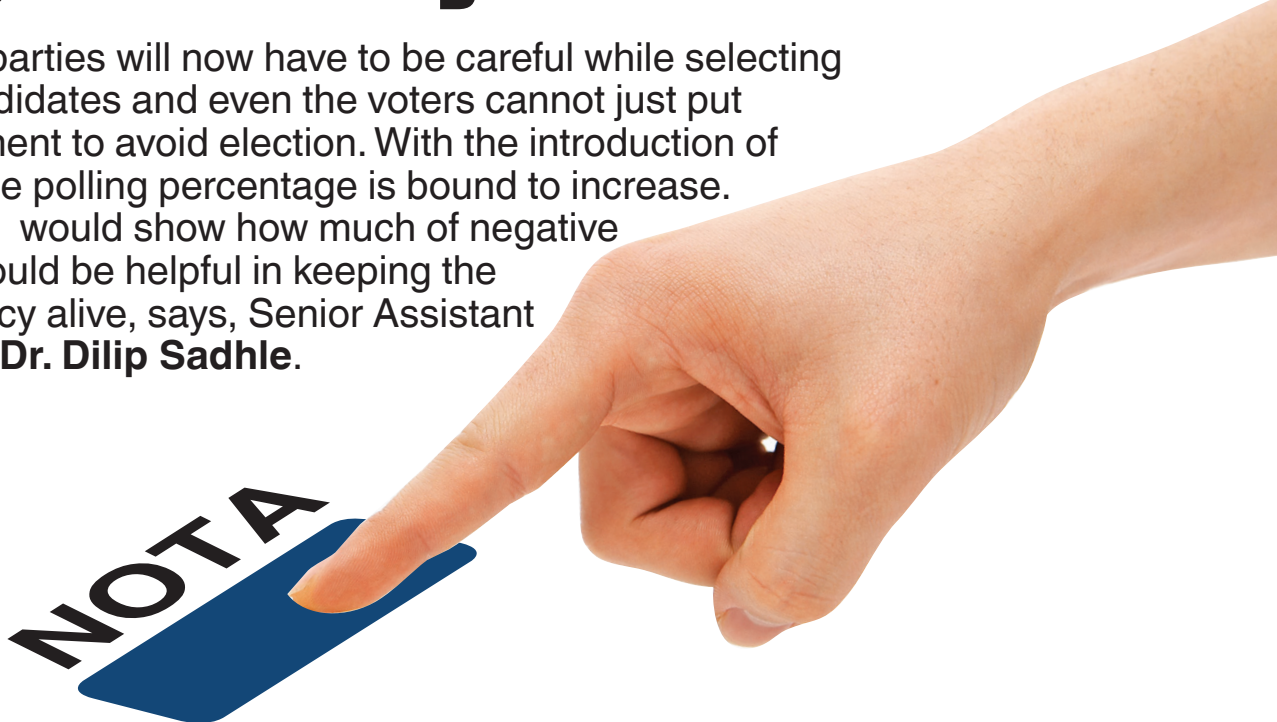
Among the lady members of the First Lok Sabha were: Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Anusayabai Borkar, Subhadra Joshi, Sucheta Kriplani, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Tarkeshwari Sinha. ■

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Right to Reject

Political parties will now have to be careful while selecting their candidates and even the voters cannot just put an argument to avoid election. With the introduction of NOTA, the polling percentage is bound to increase. Also, this would show how much of negative voting would be helpful in keeping the democracy alive, says, Senior Assistant Director, **Dr. Dilip Sadhle**.

Maharashtra was the first State to introduce NOTA option in the local self government bodies elections

India is considered to be one of the biggest democracies in the world having a multi-party democratic system. But one of the biggest problems plaguing this country is the Criminalisation of Politics. In fact India has more than 1,000 sitting MP's and MLA's with a criminal background. Several scams and scandals have emerged since last many years which have shaken the faith of the common man from the political system.

This is obvious from the fact that over the last few years, crime and money have been playing a larger than ever role in Indian electoral politics, reflecting a marked rise in the wealth of many winning candidates with criminal records. The other big scourge is the vote-bank politics which scores decisively over national interest and issues relating to India's sovereignty and integrity.

Unfortunately it is the common people of India who are on the receiving end at the time of elections as they are forced to choose the "lesser evil" instead of none. They are caught in a vicious circle where political parties claim that it is the voters who elect these tainted candidates, whereas the voters claim that they do not have any choice and have to vote for candidates or political parties they believe to be less tainted than the others.

There has been a positive change after a landmark judgement by the Supreme Court of India. The apex court on September 27, 2013, in its order has provided the option of NOTA (None of the Above) to the voter. Accepting the right of negative voting, the Supreme Court directed the inclusion the option of right to reject all the candidates. There is a provision in the Representation of Peoples Act, but the voter had to earlier make an application for it. However, with the court's directive, it is not required now. As per the Supreme Court order, the State's Election Commission provided the NOTA option to the electorate during the election to the local self government bodies. Elections to municipal corporations, zilla parishads, panchayat samitis,, municipal councils and panchayats and gram panchayats since December 1, 2013, have had the option of NOTA on the

EVMs. Maharashtra was the first State to introduce this option in the elections to the local self government bodies.

NOTA is a step in the right direction as it goes a long way to make democracy more inclusive. It helps the people to vent their displeasure on politicians or political parties whom they view to be of questionable character.

The option of 'NOTA' now enables a voter to exercise his right to vote without voting for any candidate if he does not want to vote for any of the candidates. Ballot papers or electronic voting machines will now have 'None Of The Above' (NOTA) at the end of all the names of candidates along with their symbols. A voter wanting to use his right to reject can now press the NOTA button to exercise his right to vote.

The constitution has provided every citizen the right to vote. Government of the people by the elected people is democracy. In a democracy, vote of every person is important because through this vote, we elect people's representatives and through them the government. We would not like to vote if we feel the candidate is not proper. But now if one feels so, he can do so. If a voter feels that neither of the candidates on the ballot paper or electronic voting machines is worth to vote, but he can still exercise his right to vote with the option of "None of the above" (NOTA) now being available.

The option of NOTA has been widely used in the recently held elections to the Assemblies of five States and those for the municipal corporations, zilla parishads/ panchayat samitis and gram panchayats. In the first elections in Maharashtra after the option of right to reject, 2.21 per cent voters used the option of NOTA in the municipal corporation elections in Dhule and Ahmednagar, while 5.03 per cent in Dhule, Nandurbar, Akola and Washim zilla parishad and panchayat samitis polls, 6.07 per cent in Karjat (Raigad district), Shrigonda (Ahmednagar), Sillod (Aurangabad), Risod (Washim), Brahmapuri (Chandrapur) and Mauda (Nagpur) municipal council elections and two per cent voters in the gram panchayat elections exercised this option.

While declaring the results, a candidate polling maximum votes is declared elected without taking into consideration the number of votes cast under NOTA. With this option on the EVMs, the number of voters exercising the NOTA option is immediately available. Even if the NOTA votes are more than the elected candidate, the candidate polling maximum votes gets elected. Some people feel it is an insult to democracy. But, this is a new beginning. Since the number of voters exercising the NOTA option is now available, maybe in future the NOTA votes could be taken into consideration while declaring the results.

This is an important step taken by the election commission and the Supreme Court in strengthening the democracy. A voter can use the NOTA option if he/she feels that neither of the candidates are worth casting the vote. Political parties will now have to be careful while selecting their candidates and even the voters cannot just put an argument to avoid election. With the introduction of NOTA, the polling percentage is bound to increase. Also, this would show how much of negative voting would be helpful in keeping the democracy alive. ■

The NOTA has been widely used in recently held five State Assembly elections

VOTE for **Rejection** under Rule **49-0**

Towards Record Break Voting ...

The 16th Lok Sabha Elections will be held in Maharashtra on April 10, 17 and 24. Coinciding with this occasion we are happy to present you a special issue on elections.

The enrollment drive was a challenging work as it involved awakening people from the hinterlands and different parts of the State. The Election Commission of India implemented and continued the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme to create awareness in a big way. This was implemented properly by taking the help of various folk arts, traditional media, electronic medium, National Service Schemes (NSS), National Cadet Corps (NCC), etc. The drive has been successful with a huge enrollment of first time voters.

Henceforth the Government machinery has a herculean task in hand for carrying out the whole process smoothly. It involves imparting training to the employees and officers, putting into place proper security arrangements, setting up the polling centres, sending polling instruments to the centres, enforcement of model code of conduct, keeping track of projection of candidates and political parties over electronic, print and social media and other forms of reaching out to the voters.

The election period, from announcement of elections to results, is one of the biggest challenges for any Government machinery. However Maharashtra has time and again met the challenge successfully. Hon. Chief Secretary Shri J. S. Saharia has expressed confidence in his message that this time too the State will maintain its tradition.

This special issue also gives information about the functioning of the State Election Commission. Hon. Smt. Neela Satyanarayana has the honour of becoming the first woman State Election Commissioner of Maharashtra. She has implemented various innovative experiments for empowerment of women councilors. Her contribution in infusing confidence among women is invaluable. We are grateful for the co-operation extended by the Commission.

When the issue was in the making, the Additional Commissioner of Mumbai Municipal Corporation, Smt. Manisha Patankar-Mhaiskar took over as Secretary, Medical Education, and Drug Department as well as Directorate General of Information and Public Relations. Everyone is aware that it is she who gave a new lease of life to the Lokrajya and Maharashtra Ahead. We welcome her in the family of the Directorate once again. Meanwhile, Shri Pramod Nalawade the then Director General and Secretary was posted as Secretary, General Administration Department. We are deeply indebted to him for his excellent contribution to the department.

Principal Secretary and Chief Electoral Officer of Maharashtra, Hon. Shri Nitin Gadre; Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Shri Shirish Mohod and their colleagues have extended their invaluable contribution for shaping up the issue. They are working tirelessly to create voter awareness so that maximum number of people from Maharashtra exercise their electoral franchise. I am sure that people of Maharashtra will transform this dream into reality.

The maps included in the section 'Lok Sabha Constituencies At A Glance' are specially designed by Shri Vivekanand Ghare, Head, Mumbai Branch Office, Maharashtra Remote Sensing Application Centre through his machinery. We express our sincere thanks to him.

This issue not only gives a clear idea as to how Maharashtra is gearing up to face the 16th Lok Sabha Elections, but is also a repository of valuable information which will prove to be a collector's item.

Pralhad Jadhav
Editor-in-Chief, 'Maharashtra Ahead', DGIPR

By Upholding The Democratic
Tradition of Our Country
And Without Being Influenced
By Any Considerations or
Inducements We Will
Vote Fearlessly
for
Strongest Democracy

O.I.G.S. Presented by The Government of India

MAHARASHTRA AHEAD

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